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THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

LIFE AND POEMS

OF THE

REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

VOL. III.



Parham Hall.

BOMBAY

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF THE

REV. GEORGE CRABBE:

46622

WITH

HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,

AND HIS LIFE,

BY HIS SON.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

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THE BOROUGH. (1)

PAULO MAJORA CANAMUS.
Virgil.

(1) ["The Borough," which was begun while Mr. Crabbe resided at Rendham, was completed during a visit to his native town of Aldborough, in the autumn of 1809, and published in February, 1810. In the preface he is found ascribing this new appearance to the extraordinary success of the "Parish Register;" and Mr. Jeffrey commenced his review of the Borough in these terms (*Edin. Rev.* 1810): — "We are very glad to meet with Mr. Crabbe so soon again; and particularly glad to find that his early return has been occasioned, in part, by the encouragement he received on his last appearance. This late spring of public favour, we hope, he will yet live to see ripen into mature fame. We scarcely know any poet who deserves it better; and are quite certain there is none who is more secure of keeping with posterity whatever he may win from his contemporaries."]

TO

HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND,

MARQUIS OF GRANBY;

RECORDER OF CAMBRIDGE AND SCARBOROUGH;
LORD LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS ROTULORUM OF THE COUNTY OF LEICESTER; K.G. AND LL.D.

My Lord,

The Poem, for which I have ventured to solicit your Grace's attention, was composed in a situation so near to Belvoir Castle, that the author had all the advantage to be derived from prospects extensive and beautiful, and from works of grandeur and sublimity: and though nothing of the influence arising from such situation should be discernible in these verses, either from want of adequate powers in the writer, or because his subjects do not assimilate with such views, yet would it be natural for him to indulge a wish, that he might inscribe his labours to the lord of a scene which perpetually excited his admiration, and he would plead the propriety of

placing the titles of the House of Rutland at the entrance of a volume written in the Vale of Belvoir.(1)

But, my Lord, a motive much more powerful than a sense of propriety, a grateful remembrance of benefits conferred by the noble family in which you preside, has been the great inducement for me to wish that I might be permitted to inscribe this work to your Grace: the honours of that time were to me unexpected, they were unmerited, and they were transitory: but since I am thus allowed to make public my gratitude, I am in some degree restored to the honour of that period; I have again the happiness to find myself favoured, and my exertions stimulated, by the condescension of the Duke of Rutland.

It was my fortune, in a poem which yet circulates, to write of the virtues, talents, and heroic death of Lord Robert Manners, and to bear witness to the affection of a brother whose grief was poignant, and to be soothed only by remembrance of his worth whom he so deeply deplored.(2) In a patron thus

(1) [Mr. Crabbe, in 1790, wrote, at Muston, an Essay on, the Natural History of the Vale of Belvoir, which he contributed to Mr. Nichols's History of Leicestershire. The motto is from Drayton's Polyolbion: —

— — "Do but compare the country where I lie,
My hills and oulds will say, they are the island's eye;
Consider next my site, and say it doth excel;
Then come unto my soil, and you shall see it well,
With every grass and grain that Britain forth can bring;
I challenge any vale to show me but that thing
I cannot show to her, that truly is my own."]

(2) [See Vol. I. p. 116. and Vol. II. pp. 95. 101.]

favourably predisposed, my Lord, I might look for much lenity, and could not fear the severity of critical examination: from your Grace, who, happily, have no such impediment to justice, I must not look for the same kind of indulgence. I am assured, by those whose situation gave them opportunity for knowledge, and whose abilities and attention guarded them from error, that I must not expect my failings will escape detection from want of discernment, neither am I to fear that any merit will be undistinguished through deficiency of taste. It is from this information, my Lord, and a consciousness of much which needs forgiveness, that I entreat your Grace to read my verses, with a wish, I had almost added, with a purpose to be pleased, and to make every possible allowance for subjects not always pleasing, for manners sometimes gross, and for language too frequently incorrect.

With the fullest confidence in your Grace's ability and favour, in the accuracy of your judgment, and the lenity of your decision; with grateful remembrance of benefits received, and due consciousness of the little I could merit; with prayers that your Grace may long enjoy the dignities of the House of Rutland, and continue to dictate improvement for the surrounding country;—I terminate an address, in which a fear of offending your Grace has made me so cautious in my expressions, that I may justly fear to offend many of my readers, who will think

that something more of animation should have been excited by the objects I view, the benevolence I honour, and the gratitude I profess.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obliged

and obedient humble servant,

George Crabbe.

Muston, Dec. 1809.

PREFACE.

WHETHER, if I had not been encouraged by some proofs of public favour, I should have written the Poem now before the reader, is a question which I cannot positively determine; but I will venture to assert, that I should not, in that case, have committed the work to the press; I should not have allowed my own opinion of it to have led me into further disappointment, against the voice of judges impartial and indifferent, from whose sentence it had been fruitless to appeal: the success of a late publication, therefore, may be fairly assigned, as the principal cause for the appearance of this.

When the ensuing LETTERS were so far written, that I could form an opinion of them, and when I began to conceive that they might not be unacceptable to the public, I felt myself prompted by duty, as well as interest, to put them to the press; I considered myself bound, by gratitude for the favourable treatment I had already received, to show that I was not unmindful of it; and, however this might be mixed with other motives, it operated with considerable force upon my mind, acting as a sti-

mulus to exertions naturally tardy, and to expectations easily checked.

It must nevertheless be acknowledged, that, although such favourable opinion had been formed, I was not able, with the requisite impartiality, to determine the comparative value of an unpublished manuscript, and a work sent into the world. Books, like children, when established, have doubtless our parental affection and good wishes; we rejoice to hear that they are doing well, and are received and respected in good company; but it is to manuscripts in the study, as to children in the nursery, that our care, our anxiety, and our tenderness are principally directed: they are fondled as our endearing companions; their faults are corrected with the lenity of partial love, and their good parts are exaggerated by the strength of parental imagination; nor is it easy even for the more cool and reasonable among parents, thus circumstanced, to decide upon the comparative merits of their offspring, whether they be children of the bed, or issue of the brain.

But, however favourable my own opinion may have been, or may still be, I could not venture to commit so long a Poem to the press without some endeavour to obtain the more valuable opinion of less partial judges: at the same time, I am willing to confess that I have lost some portion of the timidity once so painful, and that I am encouraged to take upon myself the decision of various points, which heretofore I entreated my friends to decide. Those friends were then my council, whose opinion I was implicitly to follow; they are now advisers, whose

ideas I am at liberty to reject. This will not, I hope, seem like arrogance: it would be more safe, it would be more pleasant, still to have that reliance on the judgment of others; but it cannot always be obtained: nor are they, however friendly disposed, ever ready to lend a helping hand to him whom they consider as one who ought by this time to have cast away the timidity of inexperience, and to have acquired the courage that would enable him to decide for himself.

When it is confessed that I have less assistance from my friends, and that the appearance of this work is, in a great measure, occasioned by the success of a former; some readers will, I fear, entertain the opinion that the book before them was written in haste, and published without due examination and revisal: should this opinion be formed, there will doubtless occur many faults which may appear as originating in neglect: Now, readers are, I believe, disposed to treat with more than common severity those writers who have been led into presumption by the approbation bestowed on their diffidence, and into idleness and unconcern by the praises given to their attention. I am therefore even anxious it should be generally known that sufficient time and application were bestowed upon this work, and by this I mean that no material alteration would be effected by delay: it is true that this confession removes one plea for the errors of the book, want of time; but, in my opinion, there is not much consolation to be drawn by reasonable minds from this resource: if a work fails, it appears to be

poor satisfaction when it is observed, that, if the author had taken more care, the event had been less disgraceful.

When the reader enters into the Poem, he will find the author retired from view, and an imaginary personage brought forward to describe his Borough for him: to him it seemed convenient to speak in the first person: but the inhabitant of a village, in the centre of the kingdom, could not appear in the character of a residing burgess in a large sea-port; and when, with this point, was considered what relations were to be given, what manners delineated, and what situations described, no method appeared to be so convenient as that of borrowing the assistance of an ideal friend: by this means the reader is in some degree kept from view of any particular place, nor will he perhaps be so likely to determine where those persons reside, and what their connections, who are so intimately know to this man of straw. (1)

From the title of this Poem, some persons will, I fear expect a political satire, — an attack upon

(1) [An intimate personal friend of Mr. Crabbe says: — "Nevertheless, the *general description* of the Borough is evidently that of Aldborough magnified — nay, by the poet's own confession it is so: —

'At her old house, her dress, her air the same,
I see mine ancient letter-loving dame:
If critics pardon what my friends approved,
Can I mine ancient widow pass unmoved?
Shall I not think what pains the matron took,
When first I trembled o'er the gilded book,' &c. — Let. 18.

"Still is the *imaginary* town a vast enlargement of the real one, containing little more than a thousand inhabitants, and having neither hospital, nor alms-house, nor clubs; and, till lately, neither sects nor schools."]

corrupt principles in a general view, or upon the customs and manners of some particular place; of these they will find nothing satirised, nothing related. It may be that graver readers would have preferred a more historical account of so considerable a Borough — its charter privileges, trade, public structures, and subjects of this kind; but I have an apology for the omission of these things, in the difficulty of describing them, and in the utter repugnancy which subsists between the studies and objects of topography and poetry. (1) What I thought

(1) On this dictum there is a pretty paragraph or two in "The Doctor:" — "The poet Crabbe has said that there subsists an utter repugnancy between the studies of topography and poetry. He must have intended by topography, when he said so, the mere definition of boundaries and specification of landmarks, such as are given in the advertisement of an estate for sale; and boys in certain parts of the country are taught to bear in mind by a remembrance in tail, when the bounds of a parish are walked by the local authorities. Such topography, indeed, bears as little relation to poetry as a map or chart to a picture. But if he had any wider meaning, it is evident, by the number of topographical poems, good, bad, and indifferent, with which our language abounds, that Mr. Crabbe's predecessors in verse, and his contemporaries also, have differed greatly from him in opinion upon this point. The Polyolbion, notwithstanding its common-place personifications and its inartificial transitions, which are as abrupt as those in the Metamorphoses or Fasti, and not so graceful, is, nevertheless, a work as much to be valued by the students and lovers of English literature, as by the writers of local history. Drayton himself, whose great talents were deservedly esteemed by the ablest of his contemporaries in the richest age of English poetry, thought he could not be more worthily employed than in what he calls the herculean task of this topographical poem; and in that belief he was encouraged by his friend and commentator Selden, to whose name the epithet of learned was, in old times, always and deservedly affixed. With how becoming a sense of its dignity and variety the poet entered upon his subject, these lines may show: —

'Thou powerful god of flames, in verse divinely great,
Touch my invention so with thy true genuine heat,
That high and noble things I slightly may not tell,
Nor light and idle toys my lines may vainly swell,'" &c.

THE DOCTOR, 1834.]

I could best describe, that I attempted: — the sea, and the country in the immediate vicinity; the dwellings, and the inhabitants; some incidents and characters, with an exhibition of morals and manners, offensive perhaps to those of extremely delicate feelings, but sometimes, I hope, neither unamiable nor unaffecting: an Election, indeed, forms a part of one Letter, but the evil there described is one not greatly nor generally deplored, and there are probably many places of this kind where it is not felt.

From the variety of relations, characters, and descriptions which a BOROUGH affords, several were rejected which a reader might reasonably expect to have met with: in this case he is entreated to believe that these, if they occurred to the author, were considered by him as beyond his ability, as subjects which he could not treat in a manner satisfactory to himself. (1) Possibly, the admission of

(1) ["Mr. Crabbe is distinguished from all other poets, both by the choice of his subjects, and by his manner of treating them. All his persons are taken from the lower ranks of life; and all his scenery from the most ordinary and familiar objects of nature or art. His characters and incidents, too, are as common as the elements out of which they are compounded are humble; and not only has he nothing prodigious or astonishing in any of his representations, but he has not even attempted to impart any of the ordinary colours of poetry to those vulgar materials. He has no moralising swains or sentimental tradesmen; and scarcely ever seeks to charm us by the artless manners or lowly virtues of his personages. On the contrary, he has represented his villagers and humble burghers as altogether as dissipated, and more dishonest and discontented, than the profligates of higher life; and, instead of conducting us through blooming groves and pastoral meadows, has led us along filthy lanes and crowded wharfs, to hospitals, almshouses, and gin-shops. In some of these delineations, he may be considered as the satirist of low life, — an occupation sufficiently arduous, and in a great degree new and original in our language. By the mere force of his art, and the novelty of his style, he compels us to attend to objects that are usually neglected, and to enter

some will be thought to require more apology than the rejection of others: in such variety, it is to be apprehended, that almost every reader will find something not according with his ideas of propriety, or something repulsive to the tone of his feelings; nor could this be avoided but by the sacrifice of every event, opinion, and even expression, which could be thought liable to produce such effect; and this casting away so largely of our cargo, through fears of danger, though it might help us to clear it, would render our vessel of little worth when she came into port. I may likewise entertain a hope, that this very variety, which gives scope to objection and censure, will also afford a better chance for approval and satisfaction. (1)

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into feelings from which we are, in general, but too eager to escape; and then trusts to nature for the effect of the representation. It is obvious, that this is not a task for an ordinary hand, and that many ingenious writers, who make a very good figure with battles, nymphs, and moonlight landscapes, would find themselves quite helpless if set down among streets, harbours, and taverns." — JEFFREY.]

(1) [In one of Mr. Crabbe's note-books we find the following observations relative to the Borough: — "I have chiefly, if not exclusively, taken my subjects and characters from that order of society where the least display of vanity is generally to be found, which is placed between the humble and the great. It is in this class of mankind that more originality of character, more variety of fortune, will be met with; because, on the one hand, they do not live in the eye of the world, and, therefore, are not kept in awe by the dread of observation and indecorum; neither, on the other, are they debarred by their want of means from the cultivation of mind and the pursuits of wealth and ambition, which are necessary to the developement of character displayed in the variety of situations to which this class is liable."]

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

These did the ruler of the deep ordain,
To build proud navies, and to rule the main.

POPE's *Homer's Iliad*, b. vi.

Such scenes has Deptford, navy-building town,
Woolwich and Wapping, smelling strong of pitch;
Such Lambeth, envy of each band and gown,
And Twickenham such, which fairer scenes enrich.

POPE's *Imitation of Spenser.*

. . . . . Et cum cœlestibus undis
Æquoreæ miscentur aquæ: caret ignibus æther,
Cæcaque nox premitur tenebris hiemisque suisque;
Discutient tamen has, præbentque micantia lumen
Fulmina: fulmineis ardescunt ignibus undæ.

OVID. *Metamorph.* lib. (1)

(1) ["Sweet waters mingle with the briny main:
No star appears to lend his friendly light;
Darkness and tempest make a double night:
But flashing fires disclose the deep by turns,
And while the lightnings blaze, the water burns."—DRYDEN.]

The Difficulty of describing Town Scenery — A Comparison with certain Views in the Country — The River and Quay — The Shipping and Business — Ship-Building — Sea-Boys and Port-Views — Village and Town Scenery again compared — Walks from Town — Cottage and adjoining Heath, &c. — House of Sunday Entertainment — The Sea: a Summer and Winter View — A Shipwreck at Night, and its Effects on Shore — Evening Amusements in the Borough — An Apology for the imperfect View which can be given of these Subjects.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

" DESCRIBE the Borough"—though our idle tribe
May love description, can we so describe,
That you shall fairly streets and buildings trace,
And all that gives distinction to a place?
This cannot be; yet, moved by your request,
A part I paint—let Fancy form the rest.
  Cities and towns, the various haunts of men,
Require the pencil; they defy the pen:
Could he, who sang so well the Grecian fleet,
So well have sung of alley, lane, or street?
Can measured lines these various buildings show,
The Town-Hall Turning, or the Prospect Row?
Can I the seats of wealth and want explore,
And lengthen out my lays from door to door?
  Then let thy Fancy aid me—I repair
From this tall mansion of our last-year's Mayor,

Till we the outskirts of the Borough reach,
And these half-buried buildings next the beach;
Where hang at open doors the net and cork,
While squalid sea-dames mend the meshy work;
Till comes the hour, when fishing through the tide
The weary husband throws his freight aside;
A living mass, which now demands the wife,
Th' alternate labours of their humble life.

Can scenes like these withdraw thee from thy wood,
Thy upland forest or thy valley's flood?
Seek then thy garden's shrubby bound, and look,
As it steals by, upon the bordering brook; (1)
That winding streamlet, limpid, lingering, slow,
Where the reeds whisper when the zephyrs blow;
Where in the midst, upon her throne of green,
Sits the large Lily (2) as the water's queen;
And makes the current, forced awhile to stay,
Murmur and bubble as it shoots away;
Draw then the strongest contrast to that stream,
And our broad river will before thee seem.

With ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide,
Flowing, it fills the channel vast and wide;

(1) [See Vol. I. p. 200. The parsonage at Muston, here alluded to, looked full on the church-yard, by no means like the common forbidding receptacles of the dead, but truly ornamental ground; for some fine elms partially concealed the small beautiful church and its spire, while the eye, travelling through their stems, rested on the banks of a stream and a picturesque old bridge: the garden enclosed the other two sides of this churchyard; but the crown of the whole was a gothic archway, cut through a thick hedge and many boughs, for through this opening, as in the deep frame of a picture, appeared, in the centre of the aerial canvass, the unrivalled Belvoir.]

(2) The white water-lily, Nymphæa alba.

Then back to sea, with strong majestic sweep
It rolls, in ebb yet terrible and deep;
Here Samphire-banks (1) and Salt-wort (2) bound the flood,
There stakes and sea-weeds withering on the mud;
And higher up, a ridge of all things base,
Which some strong tide has roll'd upon the place.
Thy gentle river boasts its pigmy boat,
Urged on by pains, half grounded, half afloat;
While at her stern an angler takes his stand,
And marks the fish he purposes to land;
From that clear space, where, in the cheerful ray
Of the warm sun, the scaly people play.
Far other craft our prouder river shows,
Hoys (3), pinks (4) and sloops; brigs, brigantines (5), and snows: (6)
Nor angler we on our wide stream descry,
But one poor dredger where his oysters lie:
He, cold and wet, and driving with the tide,
Beats his weak arms against his tarry side,
Then drains the remnant of diluted gin,
To aid the warmth that languishes within;
Renewing oft his poor attempts to beat
His tingling fingers into gathering heat.

(1) The jointed glasswort, Salicornia, is here meant, not the true samphire, the Crithmum maritimum.

(2) The Salsola of botanists.

(3) [A small vessel, usually rigged as a sloop, and employed in carrying passengers and goods from one place to another, particularly on the sea-coast. (4) The name given to ships with a very narrow stern. (5) Small merchant ships with two masts. (6) A vessel equipped with two masts, resembling the main and foremasts of a ship, and a third small mast just abaft the main mast. — BURNEY.]

He shall again be seen when evening comes,
And social parties crowd their favourite rooms:
Where on the table pipes and papers lie,
The steaming bowl or foaming tankard by;
'Tis then, with all these comforts spread around,
They hear the painful dredger's welcome sound;
And few themselves the savoury boon deny,
The food that feeds, the living luxury.

Yon is our Quay! (1) those smaller hoys from town,
Its various ware, for country-use, bring down;
Those laden waggons, in return, impart
The country-produce to the city mart;
Hark! to the clamour in that miry road,
Bounded and narrow'd by yon vessel's load;
The lumbering wealth she empties round the place,
Package, and parcel, hogshead, chest, and case:
While the loud seaman and the angry hind,
Mingling in business, bellow to the wind.

Near these a crew amphibious, in the docks,
Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks:
See! the long keel, which soon the waves must hide;
See! the strong ribs which form the roomy side;
Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,
And planks (2) which curve and crackle in the smoke.

(1) [The Quay of Slaughden, where the poet, in early life, was employed by his father in piling up butter casks, &c. in the dress of a common warehouseman; and whence, in the year 1779, he embarked on board a sloop, with three pounds in his pocket, to seek his fortune in the metropolis. See Vol. I. pp. 19. 31. 45.]

(2) The curvature of planks for the sides of a ship, &c. is, I am informed, now generally made by the power of steam. Fire is, nevertheless, still used for boats and vessels of the smaller kind.

Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far
Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar.
Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys crowd,
Swim round a ship, or swing upon the shroud;
Or in a boat purloin'd, with paddles play,
And grow familiar with the watery way:
Young though they be, they feel whose sons they are,
They know what British seamen do and dare;
Proud of that fame, they raise and they enjoy
The rustic wonder of the village-boy.
Before you bid these busy scenes adieu,
Behold the wealth that lies in public view,
Those far-extended heaps of coal and coke,
Where fresh-fill'd lime-kilns breathe their stifling smoke.
This shall pass off, and you behold, instead,
The night-fire gleaming on its chalky bed;
When from the Light-house brighter beams will rise,
To show the shipman where the shallow lies.
Thy walks are ever pleasant; every scene
Is rich in beauty, lively, or serene——
Rich—is that varied view with woods around,
Seen from the seat, within the shrubb'ry bound;
Where shines the distant lake, and where appear
From ruins bolting, unmolested deer;
Lively—the village-green, the inn, the place,
Where the good widow schools her infant-race.
Shops, whence are heard the hammer and the saw,
And village-pleasures unreproved by law:

Then how serene! when in your favourite room,
Gales from your jasmines soothe the evening gloom;
When from your upland paddock you look down,
And just perceive the smoke which hides the town;
When weary peasants at the close of day
Walk to their cots, and part upon the way;
When cattle slowly cross the shallow brook,
And shepherds pen their folds, and rest upon their crook. (1)

We prune our hedges, prime our slender trees,
And nothing looks untutor'd and at ease,
On the wide heath, or in the flow'ry vale,
We scent the vapours of the sea-born gale;
Broad-beaten paths lead on from stile to stile,
And sewers from streets, the road-side banks defile;
Our guarded fields a sense of danger show,
Where garden-crops with corn and clover grow;
Fences are form'd of wreck and placed around,
(With tenters tipp'd) a strong repulsive bound;
Wide and deep ditches by the gardens run,
And there in ambush lie the trap and gun;
Or yon broad board, which guards each tempting prize,
"Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies." (2)

(1) ["Without the romantic mellowness which envelopes the landscape of Goldsmith, or the freshness and hilarity of colouring which breathe in that of Graham, this sketch is, perhaps, superior to both in distinctness, animation, and firmness of touch; and to these is added a peculiar air of facility and freedom." — GIFFORD.]

(2) ["Where London's column, pointing to the skies,
Like a tall bully, lifts the head and lies.—"
— Pope's allusion being to the *anti-catholic* inscription on the monument erected after the great fire of London.]

There stands a cottage with an open door,
Its garden undefended blooms before:
Her wheel is still, and overturn'd her stool,
While the lone Widow seeks the neighb'ring pool:
This gives us hope, all views of town to shun—
No! here are tokens of the Sailor-son;
That old blue jacket, and that shirt of check,
And silken kerchief for the seaman's neck;
Sea-spoils and shells from many a distant shore,
And furry robe from frozen Labrador.
Our busy streets and sylvan-walks between,
Fen, marshes, bog and heath all intervene;
Here pits of crag, with spongy, plashy base,
To some enrich th' uncultivated space:
For there are blossoms rare, and curious rush,
The gale's(1) rich balm, and sun-dew's crimson blush
Whose velvet leaf with radiant beauty dress'd,
Forms a gay pillow for the plover's breast.
Not distant far, a house commodious made,
(Lonely yet public stands) for Sunday-trade;
Thither, for this day free, gay parties go,
Their tea-house walk, their tippling rendezvous;
There humble couples sit in corner-bowers,
Or gaily ramble for th' allotted hours;
Sailors and lasses from the town attend,
The servant-lover, the apprentice-friend;
With all the idle social tribes who seek
And find their humble pleasures once a week.
Turn to the watery world!—but who to thee
(A wonder yet unview'd) shall paint—the Sea?

(1) [Another name for the candle-berry.]

Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,
When lull'd by zephyrs, or when roused by storms (1),
Its colours changing, when from clouds and sun
Shades after shades upon the surface run;
Embrown'd and horrid now, and now serene,
In limpid blue, and evanescent green;
And oft the foggy banks on ocean lie (2),
Lift the fair sail, and cheat th' experienced eye.(3)
Be it the Summer-noon: a sandy space
The ebbing tide has left upon its place;
Then just the hot and stony beach above,
Light twinkling streams in bright confusion move;
(For heated thus, the warmer air ascends,
And with the cooler in its fall contends)—

(1) ["Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and sublime —
The image of Eternity — the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone."
BYRON.]

(2) Of the effect of these mists, known by the name of fog-banks, wonderful and, indeed, incredible relations are given; but their property of appearing to elevate ships at sea, and to bring them in view, is, I believe, generally acknowledged.

(3) [One of the most remarkable facts respecting aërial images, presented itself to Mr. Scoresby, in a voyage to Greenland, in 1822. Having seen an inverted image of a ship in the air, he directed to it his telescope; he was able to discover it to be his father's ship, which was at the time below the horizon. "It was," says he, "so well defined, that I could distinguish, by a telescope, every sail, the general rig of the ship, and its particular character; insomuch, that I confidently pronounced it to be my father's ship, the Fame, which it afterwards proved to be; though, on comparing notes with my father, I found that our relative position at the time gave a distance from one another of very nearly thirty miles, being about seventeen miles beyond the horizon, and some leagues beyond the limit of direct vision." — BREWSTER.]

Then the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
An equal motion; swelling as it sleeps,
Then slowly sinking; curling to the strand,
Faint, lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
And back return in silence, smooth and slow.
Ships in the calm seem anchor'd; for they glide
On the still sea, urged solely by the tide:
Art thou not present, this calm scene before,
Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more?
Yet sometimes comes a ruffling cloud to make
The quiet surface of the ocean shake;
As an awaken'd giant with a frown
Might show his wrath, and then to sleep sink down.
View now the Winter-storm! above, one cloud,
Black and unbroken, all the skies o'ershroud;
Th' unwieldy porpoise through the day before
Had roll'd in view of boding men on shore;
And sometimes hid and sometimes show'd his form,
Dark as the cloud, and furious as the storm.
All where the eye delights, yet dreads to roam,
The breaking billows cast the flying foam
Upon the billows rising—all the deep
Is restless change; the waves so swell'd and steep,
Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,
Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells:
But nearer land you may the billows trace,
As if contending in their watery chase;
May watch the mightiest till the shoal they reach,
Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch;

Curl'd as they come, they strike with furious force,
And then re-flowing, take their grating course,
Raking the rounded flints, which ages past
Roll'd by their rage, and shall to ages last. (1)

Far off the Petrel in the troubled way
Swims with her brood, or flutters in the spray;
She rises often, often drops again,
And sports at ease on the tempestuous main. (2)

High o'er the restless deep, above the reach
Of gunner's hope, vast flights of Wild-ducks stretch;
Far as the eye can glance on either side,
In a broad space and level line they glide;
All in their wedge-like figures from the north,
Day after day, flight after flight, go forth. (3)

In-shore their passage tribes of Sea-gulls urge,
And drop for prey within the sweeping surge;

(1) ["A prospect of the ocean inspires Mr. Crabbe with congenial sublimity. The winter-storm is detailed with a masterly and interesting exactness." — GIFFORD.]

(2) [The storm-petrel is the true 'Mother Carey's chicken' of the sailors, and also the 'witch,' the 'spency,' the 'storm-finch,' and a variety of other names, the abundance of which shows, that it is at once a bird of common occurrence and of some interest. During its Pelasgic period, it is seen on most parts of the seas, especially those on the north, west, and south-west of Britain, where it is the last bird to leave the outward-bound ship, and the first to meet ships returning home. It plays about the vessels, and outstrips their swiftest course, skimming the surface of the water with equal ease and grace, and tipping so regularly with wings and feet, that she appears to be running on all-fours. The wings do not, however, get wet or splash, and the bird can make wing in any direction of a moderate wind, apparently with very little fatigue. — MUDIE.]

(3) [Wild-ducks fly at a considerable height in the air, and in the form of inclined lines or triangles. When they rest or sleep on the water, some of the band are always awake, to watch for the common safety, and to sound the alarm on the approach of danger Hence they are with difficulty surprised; and hence the fowler, who goes in pursuit of them, requires to exert all his cunning, and frequently no inconsiderable degree of toil and patience. — SHAW.]

Oft in the rough opposing blast they fly
Far back, then turn, and all their force apply,
While to the storm they give their weak complaining cry;
Or clap the sleek white pinion to the breast,
And in the restless ocean dip for rest. (1)
Darkness begins to reign; the louder wind
Appals the weak and awes the firmer mind;
But frights not him, whom evening and the spray
In part conceal—yon Prowler on his way:
Lo! he has something seen; he runs apace,
As if he fear'd companion in the chase;
He sees his prize, and now he turns again,
Slowly and sorrowing—"Was your search in vain?"
Gruffly he answers, "'T is a sorry sight!
"A seaman's body: there'll be more to-night!"
Hark! to those sounds! they 're from distress at sea:
How quick they come! What terrors may there be!
Yes, 't is a driven vessel: I discern
Lights, signs of terror, gleaming from the stern;
Others behold them too, and from the town
In various parties seamen hurry down;

(1) [Water-fowl, in a peculiar manner, discover, in their flight, some determined aim. They eagerly coast the river, or return to the sea; bent on some purpose of which they never lose sight. But the evolutions of the gull appear capricious, and undirected, both when she flies alone and in large companies. The more, however, her character suffers as a loiterer, the more it is raised in picturesque value, by her continuing longer before the eye and displaying, in her elegant sweeps along the air, her sharp-pointed wings and her bright silvery hue. She is beautiful, also, not only on the wing, but when she floats, in numerous assemblies, on the water; or when she rests on the shore, dotting either one or the other with white spots; which, minute as they are, are very picturesque.—GILPIN.]

Their wives pursue, and damsels urged by dread,
Lest men so dear be into danger led;
Their head the gown has hooded, and their call
In this sad night is piercing like the squall;
They feel their kinds of power, and when they meet,
Chide, fondle, weep, dare, threaten, or intreat.
See one poor girl, all terror and alarm,
Has fondly seized upon her lover's arm;
"Thou shalt not venture;" and he answers "No!
"I will not"—still she cries, "Thou shalt not go."
No need of this; not here the stoutest boat
Can through such breakers, o'er such billows float,
Yet may they view these lights upon the beach,
Which yield them hope, whom help can never reach
From parted clouds the moon her radiance throws
On the wild waves, and all the danger shows;
But shows them beaming in her shining vest,
Terrific splendour! gloom in glory dress'd!
This for a moment, and then clouds again
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign. (1)
But hear we now those sounds? Do lights appear?
I see them not! the storm alone I hear:

(1) ["The signals of distress are heard—the inhabitants of the Borough crowd to the strand; but the boisterousness of the sea precludes all possibility of affording assistance to the crew of the distressed vessel. 'Yet,' observes the poet, in lines of dreadful meaning,—

'Yet may they view those lights upon the beach,
Which yield them hope, whom help can never reach.'

The sudden appearance of the moon, breaking at such a moment from a cloud over the tempestuous waste, is superlatively described. The imposing tumult of these scenes scarcely permits us to remark how finely in these passages the grandeur of the subject is supported by that of the verse."—GIFFORD.]

And lo! the sailors homeward take their way;
Man must endure—let us submit and pray.
Such are our Winter-views: but night comes on—
Now business sleeps, and daily cares are gone;
Now parties form, and some their friends assist
To waste the idle hours at sober whist;
The tavern's pleasure or the concert's charm
Unnumber'd moments of their sting disarm;
Play-bills and open doors a crowd invite,
To pass off one dread portion of the night;
And show and song and luxury combined,
Lift off from man this burthen of mankind.
Others advent'rous walk abroad and meet
Returning parties pacing through the street,
When various voices, in the dying day,
Hum in our walks, and greet us in our way;
When tavern-lights flit on from room to room,
And guide the tippling sailor staggering home:
There as we pass, the jingling bells betray
How business rises with the closing day:
Now walking silent, by the river's side,
The ear perceives the rippling of the tide;
Or measured cadence of the lads who tow
Some enter'd hoy, to fix her in her row;
Or hollow sound, which from the parish-bell
To some departed spirit bids farewell!
Thus shall you something of our Borough know,
Far as a verse, with Fancy's aid, can show;
Of Sea or River, of a Quay or Street,
The best description must be incomplete;
But when a happier theme succeeds, and when
Men are our subjects and the deeds of men;

Then may we find the Muse in happier style,
And we may sometimes sigh and sometimes smile. (1)

(1) This promise to the reader, that he should both smile and sigh in the perusal of the following Letters may appear vain, and more than an author ought to promise; but let it be considered that the character assumed is that of a friend, who gives an account of objects, persons, and events to his correspondent, and who was therefore at liberty, without any imputation of this kind, to suppose in what manner he would be affected by such descriptions.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER II.

THE CHURCH.

. . . . Festinat enim decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio! dum bibimus, dum serta, unguenta, puellas
Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.—Juv. Sat. ix. (1.)

And when at last thy Love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath?
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death? — Percy.

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(1) ["Lo! while we give the unregarded hour
To revelry and joy, in Pleasure's bower,
While now, for rosy wreaths our brows to twine,
And now for nymphs we call, and now for wine;
The noiseless foot of Time steals swiftly by,
And ere we dream of manhood, age is nigh. —

"I believe that there was no translation of this satire in Shakspeare's time; yet he has given, with kindred genius, a copy of *obrepit non intellecta senectus*: —

——— 'on our quick'st attempts,
The noiseless and inaudible foot of Time
Steals ere we can effect them.'" — Gifford.]

Several Meanings of the Word *Church* — The Building so called, here intended — Its Antiquity and Grandeur — Columns and Ailes — The Tower: the Stains made by Time compared with the mock Antiquity of the Artist — Progress of Vegetation on such Buildings — Bells — Tombs: one in decay — Mural Monuments, and the Nature of their Inscriptions — An Instance in a departed Burgess — Churchyard Graves — Mourners for the Dead — A Story of a betrothed Pair in humble Life, and Effects of Grief in the Survivor.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER II.

THE CHURCH.

" WHAT is a Church?"—Let Truth and Reason speak,
They would reply, " The faithful, pure, and meek;
" From Christian folds, the one selected race,
" Of all professions, and in every place." [cries,
" What is a Church?"—" A flock," our Vicar
" Whom bishops govern and whom priests advise;
" Wherein are various states and due degrees,
" The Bench for honour, and the Stall for ease;
" That ease be mine, which, after all his cares,
" The pious, peaceful prebendary shares."
" What is a Church?"—Our honest Sexton tells,
" 'T is a tall building, with a tower and bells;
" Where priest and clerk with joint exertion strive
" To keep the ardour of their flock alive;
" That, by his periods eloquent and grave;
" This, by responses, and a well-set stave:

" These for the living; but when life be fled,
" I toll myself the requiem for the dead." (1)
'Tis to this Church I call thee, and that place
Where slept our fathers when they'd run their race:
We too shall rest, and then our children keep
Their road in life, and then, forgotten, sleep;
Meanwhile the building slowly falls away,
And, like the builders, will in time decay.
The old Foundation—but it is not clear
When it was laid—you care not for the year;
On this, as parts decayed by time and storms,
Arose these various disproportion'd forms;
Yet Gothic all—the learn'd who visit us
(And our small wonders) have decided thus:—
" Yon noble Gothic arch," " That Gothic door;"
So have they said; of proof you 'll need no more.
Here large plain columns rise in solemn style,
You 'd love the gloom they make in either aile;
When the sun's rays, enfeebled as they pass
(And shorn of splendour) through the storied glass,
Faintly display the figures on the floor,
Which pleased distinctly in their place before.
But ere you enter, yon bold Tower survey,
Tall and entire, and venerably grey,
For time has soften'd what was harsh when new,
And now the stains are all of sober hue;
The living stains which Nature's hand alone,
Profuse of life, pours forth upon the stone:

(1) [The following description has always been considered a correct one of Aldborough church, where Mr. Crabbe first officiated as a clergyman, and an engraving of which will form a frontispiece to one of the volumes of this collection.]

For ever growing; where the common eye
Can but the bare and rocky bed descry;
There Science loves to trace her tribes minute,
The juiceless foliage, and the tasteless fruit;
There she perceives them round the surface creep,
And while they meet their due distinction keep;
Mix'd but not blended; each its name retains,
And these are Nature's ever-during stains.

And wouldst thou, Artist! with thy tints and brush,
Form shades like these? Pretender, where thy blush? (1)
In three short hours shall thy presuming hand
Th' effect of three slow centuries command? (2)
Thou may'st thy various greens and greys contrive,
They are not Lichens (3), nor like aught alive;—

(1) Nothing, I trust, in this and the preceding paragraph, which relates to the imitation of what are called weather-stains on buildings, will seem to any invidious or offensive. I wished to make a comparison between those minute and curious bodies which cover the surface of some edifices, and those kinds of stains which are formed of boles and ochres, and laid on with a brush. Now, as the work of time cannot be anticipated in such cases, it may be very judicious to have recourse to such expedients as will give to a recent structure the venerable appearance of antiquity; and in this case, though I might still observe the vast difference between the living varieties of nature and the distant imitation of the artist, yet I could not forbear to make use of his dexterity, because he could not clothe my freestone with *mucor*, *lichen* and *byssus*.—[There is much characteristic simplicity in this apology. About the period at which this *Letter* was written, Mr. Crabbe had called upon the Rev. J. Kendall, rector of Barrowby, who had shown him an imitation on his own walls, which, in the judgment of some, appeared preferable to the actual *mucor*, &c.]

(2) If it should be objected, that centuries are not slower than hours, because the speed of time must be uniform, I would answer, that I understand so much, and mean that they are slower in no other sense, than because they are not finished so soon.

(3) [In botany, a genus of the class Cryptogamia. Since the publication of the *Species Plantarum* of Linnæus, in which he described only eighty-one species of lichens, more than a thousand new ones have been discovered. Their places of growth are various; some on the most elevated and exposed

But yet proceed, and when thy tints are lost,
Fled in the shower, or crumbled by the frost;
When all thy work is done away as clean
As if thou never spread'st thy grey and green;
Then may'st thou see how Nature's work is done,
How slowly true she lays her colours on;
When her least speck upon the hardest flint
Has mark and form and is a living tint;
And so embodied with the rock, that few
Can the small germ upon the substance view. (1)
Seeds, to our eye invisible, will find
On the rude rock the bed that fits their kind;
There, in the rugged soil, they safely dwell,
Till showers and snows the subtle atoms swell,
And spread th' enduring foliage;—then we trace
The freckled flower upon the flinty base;
These all increase, till in unnoticed years
The stony tower as grey with age appears;
With coats of vegetation, thinly spread,
Coat above coat, the living on the dead:
These then dissolve to dust, and make a way
For bolder foliage, nursed by their decay:

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rocks, others on the trunks of trees, and some on the surface of the ground.]

(1) This kind of vegetation, as it begins upon siliceous stones, is very thin, and frequently not to be distinguished from the surface of the flint. The byssus jolithus of Linnæus (lepraria jolithus of the present system), an adhesive carmine crust on rocks and old buildings, was, even by scientific persons, taken for the substance on which it spread. A great variety of these minute vegetables are to be found in some parts of the coast, where the beach, formed of stones of various kinds, is undisturbed, and exposed to every change of weather; in this situation, the different species of lichen, in their different stages of growth, have an appearance interesting and agreeable even to those who are ignorant of, and indifferent to the cause

The long-enduring Ferns (1) in time will all
Die and depose their dust upon the wall;
Where the wing'd seed may rest, till many a flower
Show Flora's triumph o'er the falling tower.

But ours yet stands, and has its Bells renown'd
For size magnificent and solemn sound;
Each has its motto: some contrived to tell,
In monkish rhyme, the uses of a bell; (2)
Such wond'rous goods as few conceive could spring
From ten loud coppers when their clappers swing.

Enter'd the Church—we to a tomb proceed,
Whose names and titles few attempt to read;
Old English letters, and those half pick'd out,
Leave us, unskilful readers, much in doubt;

(1) ["We have the receipt of fern-seed; we walk invisible."—SHAKSPEARE, *Hen. IV.*]

(2) [The baptism of church bells was anciently common in England, and is still practised in many Roman Catholic countries. "The priest," says Lord Kaimes, "assisted by some of his brethren, mumbles over some prayers and sprinkles the outside with holy-water, while they wash the inside with the same precious liquor. The priest then draws seven crosses on the outside and four on the inside, with consecrated oil. Then a censer of frankincense is put under the bell to smoke it; and the whole concludes with a prayer." (*Sketches of Man*, vol. iv. p. 381.)—The bell, thus christened and consecrated, was esteemed to be endued with great powers. Its "*uses*" and faculties are six in number, which are thus enumerated and translated by old Fuller:—

"Funera plango.	Men's death I tell by doleful knell.
Fulmina frango.	Lightning and thunder I break asunder.
Sabbata pango.	On sabbath all to church I call.
Excito lentos.	The sleepy head I raise from bed.
Dissipo ventos.	The winds so fierce I doe disperse.
Paco cruentos.	Men's cruel rage I doe asswage."

"The passing-bell," says Grose, "was anciently rung for two purposes: one to bespeak the prayers of all good Christians for a soul just departing; the other to drive away the evil spirits who stood at the bed's foot, and about the house, ready to seize their prey, or at least to terrify and molest the soul in its passage; but by the ringing of that bell (for Durandus informs us evil spirits are much afraid of bells) they were kept aloof."]

Our sons shall see its more dĕgraded state;
The tomb of grandeur hastens to its fate;
That marble arch, our sexton's favourite show,
With all those ruff'd and painted pairs below;
The noble Lady and the Lord who rest
Supine, as courtly dame and warrior dress'd;
All are departed from their state sublime,
Mangled and wounded in their war with Time
Colleagued with mischief; here a leg is fled,
And lo! the Baron with but half a head;
Midway is cleft the arch; the very base
Is batter'd round and shifted from its place.
Wonder not, Mortal, at thy quick decay—
See! men of marble piecemeal melt away;
When whose the image we no longer read,
But monuments themselves memorials need. (1)
With few such stately proofs of grief or pride
By wealth erected, is our Church supplied;
But we have mural tablets, every size,
That woe could wish, or vanity devise.

(1) In the course of a long poem, it is very difficult to avoid a recurrence of the same thoughts, and of similar expressions; and, however careful I have been myself in detecting and removing these kind of repetitions, my readers, I question not, would, if disposed to seek them, find many remaining. For these, I can only plead that common excuse—they are the offences of a bad memory, and not of voluntary inattention; to which I must add the difficulty (I have already mentioned) of avoiding the error: this kind of plagiarism will therefore, I conceive, be treated with lenity; and of the more criminal kind—borrowing from others—I plead, with much confidence, "Not guilty." But while I claim exemption from guilt, I do not affirm that much of sentiment and much of expression may not be detected in the vast collection of English poetry. It is sufficient for an author, that he uses not the words or ideas of another without acknowledgment; and this, and no more than this, I mean, by disclaiming debts of the kind; yet resemblances are sometimes so very

Death levels man,—the wicked and the just,
The wise, the weak, lie blended in the dust;
And by the honours dealt to every name,
The King of Terrors seems to level fame.
—See! here lamented wives, and every wife
The pride and comfort of her husband's life;
Here, to her spouse, with every virtue graced,
His mournful widow has a trophy placed;
And here 't is doubtful if the duteous son,
Or the good father, be in praise outdone.
This may be Nature: when our friends we lose,
Our alter'd feelings alter too our views;
What in their tempers teased us or distress'd,
Is, with our anger and the dead, at rest;
And much we grieve, no longer trial made,
For that impatience which we then display'd:
Now to their love and worth of every kind
A soft compunction turns th' afflicted mind;
Virtues neglected then, adored become,
And graces slighted, blossom on the tomb.
'T is well; but let not love nor grief believe
That we assent (who neither loved nor grieve)

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striking, that it requires faith in a reader to admit they were undesigned. A line in this letter,

"And monuments themselves memorials need,"

was written long before the author, in an accidental recourse to Juvenal. read—

"Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris." *
Sat. x. l. 146.

and for this, I believe, the reader will readily give me credit.

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* [For, like their mouldering tenants, tombs decay,
And, with the dust they hide, are swept away." — GIFFORD.]

To all that praise which on the tomb is read,
To all that passion dictates for the dead;
But more indignant, we the tomb deride,
Whose bold inscription flattery sells to pride. (1)
Read of this Burgess—on the stone appear
How worthy he! how virtuous! and how dear!
What wailing was there when his spirit fled,
How mourn'd his lady for her lord when dead,
And tears abundant through the town were shed;
See! he was liberal, kind, religious, wise,
And free from all disgrace and all disguise; (2)
His sterling worth, which words cannot express,
Lives with his friends, their pride and their distress.

(1) ["Hence bards, like Proteus long in vain tied down,
Escape in monsters, and amaze the town:
Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines,
Hence journals, medleys, merc'ries, magazines,
SEPULCRAL LIES, our holy walls, to grace," &c. — POPE.

"This," says Warburton, "is a just satire on the flatteries and falsehoods admitted to be inscribed on the walls of churches, in epitaphs. The following epigram alludes to the too long and sometimes fulsome epitaphs written by Dr. Friend, in pure Latinity indeed, but full of antitheses: —

'FRIEND! in your epitaphs, I'm griev'd
So very much is said:
One half will never be believed,
The other never read.'"

(2) "Death," says Bishop Horne, "may be said, with almost equal propriety, to confer as well as to level all distinctions. In consequence of that event, a kind of chemical operation takes place; for those characters which were mixed with the gross particles of vice, by being thrown into the alembic of flattery, are sublimated into the essence of virtue. He who, during the performance of his part upon the stage of the world, was little, if at all, applauded, after the close of the drama is portrayed as the favourite of every virtue under heaven. To save the opulent from oblivion the sculptor unites his labours with the scholar or the poet, whilst the rustic is indebted for his mite of posthumous renown to the carpenter, the painter, or the mason. The structures of fame are, in both cases, built with materials whose duration is short. It may check the sallies of pride to reflect on the mortality of men; but for its complete humiliation, let it be remembered, that epitaphs and monuments decay."]

All this of Jacob Holmes? for his the name;
He thus kind, liberal, just, religious?—Shame!
What is the truth? Old Jacob married thrice;
He dealt in coals, and av'rice was his vice;
He ruled the Borough when his year came on,
And some forget, and some are glad he 's gone;
For never yet with shilling could he part,
But when it left his hand, it struck his heart.
Yet, here will Love its last attentions pay,
And place memorials on these beds of clay.
Large level stones lie flat upon the grave,
And half a century's sun and tempest brave;
But many an honest tear and heartfelt sigh
Have follow'd those who now unnoticed lie;
Of these what numbers rest on every side!
Without one token left by grief or pride;
Their graves soon levell'd to the earth, and then
Will other hillocks rise o'er other men;
Daily the dead on the decay'd are thrust,
And generations follow, "dust to dust." (1)
Yes! there are real Mourners—I have seen
A fair, sad Girl, mild, suffering, and serene;

(1) ["'Tis strange, the shortest letter that man uses
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages: to what straits old Time reduces
Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this—
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that 's his.
And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,
His station, generation, even his nation,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank,
In chronological commemoration;
Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,
Or graven stone found in a barrack's station
In digging the foundation of a closet
May turn his name up as a rare deposit.—BYRON.]

Attention (through the day) her duties claim'd,
And to be useful as resign'd she aim'd:
Neatly she dress'd, nor vainly seem'd t' expect
Pity for grief, or pardon for neglect;
But when her wearied parents sunk to sleep,
She sought her place to meditate and weep:
Then to her mind was all the past display'd,
That faithful Memory brings to Sorrow's aid:
For then she thought on one regretted Youth,
Her tender trust, and his unquestion'd truth;
In ev'ry place she wander'd, where they 'd been,
And sadly sacred held the parting scene;
Where last for sea he took his leave—that place
With double interest would she nightly trace;
For long the courtship was, and he would say,
Each time he sail'd, — "This once, and then the day:"
Yet prudence tarried, but when last he went,
He drew from pitying love a full consent.

Happy he sail'd, and great the care she took,
That he should softly sleep, and smartly look;
White was his better linen, and his check
Was made more trim than any on the deck;
And every comfort men at sea can know
Was hers to buy, to make, and to bestow:
For he to Greenland sail'd, and much she told,
How he should guard against the climate's cold;
Yet saw not danger; dangers he'd withstood,
Nor could she trace the fever in his blood:
His messmates smiled at flushings in his cheek,
And he too smiled, but seldom would he speak;

For now he found the danger, felt the pain,
With grievous symptoms he could not explain;
Hope was awaken'd, as for home he sail'd,
But quickly sank, and never more prevail'd.
He call'd his friend, and prefaced with a sigh
A lover's message — "Thomas, I must die:
"Would I could see my Sally, and could rest
"My throbbing temples on her faithful breast,
"And gazing go! — if not, this trifle take,
"And say, till death I wore it for her sake;
"Yes! I must die—blow on, sweet breeze, blow on!
"Give me one look, before my life be gone,
"Oh! give me that, and let me not despair,
"One last fond look—and now repeat the prayer."
He had his wish, had more; I will not paint
The Lovers' meeting: she beheld him faint, —
With tender fears, she took a nearer view,
Her terrors doubling as her hopes withdrew;
He tried to smile, and, half succeeding, said,
"Yes! I must die;" and hope for ever fled.
Still long she nursed him: tender thoughts meantime
Were interchanged, and hopes and views sublime
To her he came to die, and every day
She took some portion of the dread away;
With him she pray'd, to him his Bible read,
Soothed the faint heart, and held the aching head:
She came with smiles the hour of pain to cheer;
Apart she sigh'd; alone, she shed the tear;
Then, as if breaking from a cloud, she gave
Fresh light, and gilt the prospect of the grave.

One day he lighter seem'd, and they forgot
The care, the dread, the anguish of their lot;
They spoke with cheerfulness, and seem'd to think,
Yet said not so—"Perhaps he will not sink:"
A sudden brightness in his look appear'd,
A sudden vigour in his voice was heard;—
She had been reading in the Book of Prayer,
And led him forth, and placed him in his chair;
Lively he seem'd, and spoke of all he knew,
The friendly many, and the favourite few;
Nor one that day did he to mind recall
But she has treasured, and she loves them all;
When in her way she meets them, they appear
Peculiar people—death has made them dear.
He named his Friend, but then his hand she press'd,
And fondly whisper'd, "Thou must go to rest;"
"I go," he said; but as he spoke, she found
His hand more cold, and fluttering was the sound!
Then gazed affrighten'd; but she caught a last,
A dying look of love,—and all was past!

She placed a decent stone his grave above,
Neatly engraved—an offering of her love;
For that she wrought, for that forsook her bed,
Awake alike to duty and the dead;
She would have grieved, had friends presumed to spare
The least assistance—'t was her proper care.

Here will she come, and on the grave will sit,
Folding her arms, in long abstracted fit;
But if observer pass, will take her round,
And careless seem, for she would not be found;

Then go again, and thus her hour employ,
While visions please her, and while woes destroy. (1)
Forbear, sweet Maid! nor be by fancy led,
To hold mysterious converse with the dead;
For sure at length thy thoughts, thy spirits pain,
In this sad conflict will disturb thy brain;
All have their tasks and trials; thine are hard,
But short the time, and glorious the reward;
Thy patient spirit to thy duties give,
Regard the dead, but to the living live. (2)

(1) ["Longinus somewhere mentions, that it was a question among the critics of his age, whether the sublime could be produced by tenderness. If this question had not been already determined, this history would have gone far to bring it to a decision." — GIFFORD.

"Mr. Crabbe has been called a gloomy, which must mean, if any accusation is implied in the term, a false moralist. No doubt, to persons who read his poetry superficially, and by snatches and glances, it may seem to give too dark a picture of life; but this, we are convinced, is not the feeling which the study of *the whole* awakens. Here and there he presents us with images of almost perfect beauty, innocence, and happiness; but as such things are seldom seen, and soon disappear in real life, it seems to be Mr. Crabbe's opinion, that so likewise ought they to start out with sudden and transitory smiles, among the darker, the more solemn, or the gloomy pictures of his poetry. It is certain that there are, in his writings, passages of as pure and profound pathos as in any English poet, that he dwells with as holy a delight as any other on the settled countenance of peace, and that, in his wanderings through the mazes of human destiny, his heart burns within him, when his eyes are, at times, charmed away from the troubles and wickedness of life to its repose and its virtue." — WILSON.]

(2) It has been observed to me, that in the first part of the story, I have represented this young woman as resigned and attentive to her duties; from which it would appear, that the concluding advice is unnecessary: but, if the reader will construe the expression 'to the living live,' into the sense — live entirely for them, attend to duties only which are real, and not those imposed by the imagination, — I shall have no reason to alter the line which terminates the story.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER III.

THE VICAR — THE CURATE, ETC.

And telling me the sov'reign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise.
SHAKSPEARE. — *Henry IV.* Part I. Act 1.

So gentle, yet so brisk, so wond'rous sweet,
So fit to prattle at a lady's feet. — CHURCHILL.

Much are the precious hours of youth mispent
In climbing learning's rugged, steep ascent:
When to the top the bold adventurer's got,
He reigns vain monarch of a barren spot;
While in the vale of ignorance below,
Folly and vice to rank luxuriance grow;
Honours and wealth pour in on every side,
And proud preferment rolls her golden tide. — CHURCHILL.

VICAR.

The lately departed Minister of the Borough — His soothing and supplicatory Manners — His cool and timid Affections — No Praise due to such negative Virtue — Address to Characters of this Kind — The Vicar's Employments — His Talents and moderate Ambition — His Dislike of Innovation — His mild but ineffectual Benevolence — A Summary of his Character.

CURATE.

Mode of paying the Borough-Minister — The Curate has no such Resources — His Learning and Poverty — Erroneous Idea of his Parent — His Feelings as a Husband and Father — The dutiful Regard of his numerous Family — His Pleasure as a Writer, how interrupted — No Resource in the Press — Vulgar Insult — His Account of a Literary Society, and a Fund for the Relief of indigent Authors, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER III.

THE VICAR—THE CURATE, &c.

WHERE ends our chancel in a vaulted space,
Sleep the departed Vicars of the place;
Of most, all mention, memory, thought are past —
But take a slight memorial of the last.
To what famed college we our Vicar owe,
To what fair county, let historians show:
Few now remember when the mild young man,
Ruddy and fair, his Sunday-task began;
Few live to speak of that soft soothing look
He cast around, as he prepared his book;
It was a kind of supplicating smile,
But nothing hopeless of applause the while;
And when he finish'd, his corrected pride
Felt the desert, and yet the praise denied.
Thus he his race began, and to the end
His constant care was, no man to offend;

No haughty virtues stirr'd his peaceful mind;
Nor urged the Priest to leave the Flock behind;
He was his Master's Soldier, but not one
To lead an army of his Martyrs on:
Fear was his ruling passion; yet was Love,
Of timid kind, once known his heart to move;
It led his patient spirit where it paid
Its languid offerings to a listening Maid:
She, with her widow'd Mother, heard him speak,
And sought awhile to find what he would seek:
Smiling he came, he smiled when he withdrew,
And paid the same attention to the two;
Meeting and parting without joy or pain,
He seem'd to come that he might go again.
The wondering girl, no prude, but something nice,
At length was chill'd by his unmelting ice;
She found her tortoise held such sluggish pace,
That she must turn and meet him in the chase:
This not approving, she withdrew till one
Came who appear'd with livelier hope to run;
Who sought a readier way the heart to move,
Than by faint dalliance of unfixing love.

Accuse me not that I approving paint
Impatient Hope or Love without restraint;
Or think the Passions, a tumultuous throng,
Strong as they are, ungovernably strong:
But is the laurel to the soldier due,
Who cautious comes not into danger's view?
What worth has Virtue by Desire untried,
When Nature's self enlists on duty's side?

The married dame in vain assail'd the truth
And guarded bosom of the Hebrew youth;

But with the daughter of the Priest of On (1)
The love was lawful, and the guard was gone;
But Joseph's fame had lessen'd in our view.
Had he, refusing, fled the maiden too.

Yet our good priest to Joseph's praise aspired,
As once rejecting what his heart desired;
"I am escaped," he said, when none pursued:
When none attack'd him, "I am unsubdued;"
"Oh pleasing pangs of love!" he sang again,
Cold to the joy, and stranger to the pain.
Ev'n in his age would he address the young,
"I too have felt these fires, and they are strong;"
But from the time he left his favourite maid,
To ancient females his devoirs were paid;
And still they miss him after Morning-prayer;
Nor yet successor fills the Vicar's chair,
Where kindred spirits in his praise agree,
A happy few, as mild and cool as he;
The easy followers in the female train,
Led without love, and captives without chain.

Ye Lilies male! think (as your tea you sip,
While the town small-talk flows from lip to lip;
Intrigues half-gather'd, conversation-scraps,
Kitchen-cabals, and nursery-mishaps,)
If the vast world may not some scene produce,
Some state where your small talents might have use;
Within seraglios you might harmless move,
Mid ranks of beauty, and in haunts of love;
There from too daring man the treasures guard,
An easy duty, and its own reward;

(1) ["And Pharaoh gave Joseph to wife Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, priest in On."—*Gen.* xli. 45.]

Nature's soft subsitutes, you there might save
From crime the tyrant, and from wrong the slave.
But let applause be dealt in all we may,
Our Priest was cheerful, and in season gay;
His frequent visits seldom fail'd to please;
Easy himself, he sought his neighbour's ease:
To a small garden with delight he came,
And gave successive flowers a summer's fame;
These he presented with a grace his own
To his fair friends, and made their beauties known,
Not without moral compliment; how they
" Like flowers were sweet, and must like flowers
decay."
Simple he was, and loved the simple truth,
Yet had some useful cunning from his youth;
A cunning never to dishonour lent,
And rather for defence than conquest meant;
'Twas fear of power, with some desire to rise,
But not enough to make him enemies;
He ever aim'd to please; and to offend
Was ever cautious; for he sought a friend;
Yet for the friendship never much would pay,
Content to bow, be silent, and obey,
And by a soothing suff'rance find his way.
Fiddling and fishing were his arts: at times
He alter'd sermons, and he aim'd at rhymes;
And his fair friends, not yet intent on cards,
Oft he amused with riddles and charades.
Mild were his doctrines, and not one discourse
But gain'd in softness what it lost in force:
Kind his opinions; he would not receive
An ill report, nor evil act believe;

" If true, 'twas wrong; but blemish great or small
" Have all mankind; yea, sinners are we all."
If ever fretful thought disturb'd his breast,
If aught of gloom that cheerful mind oppress'd,
It sprang from innovation; it was then
He spake of mischief made by restless men,
Not by new doctrines: never in his life
Would he attend to controversial strife;
For Sects he cared not; " They are not of us,
" Nor need we, brethren, their concerns discuss;
" But 'tis the change, the schism at home I feel;
" Ills few perceive, and none have skill to heal:
" Not at the altar our young brethren read
" (Facing their flock) the decalogue and creed;
" But at their duty, in their desks they stand,
" With naked surplice, lacking hood and band:
" Churches are now of holy song bereft,
" And half our ancient customs changed or left;
" Few sprigs of ivy are at Christmas seen,
" Nor crimson berry tips the holly's green; (1)
" Mistaken choirs refuse the solemn strain
" Of ancient Sternhold, which from ours amain

(1) ["Against the feast of Christmas," says Stowe, "every man's house, as also their parish churches, were decked with holme, ivy, bayes, berries, and whatever the season of the year afforded to be green." Gay, in his Trivia, thus describes the custom:—

" When rosemary and bays, the poet's crown,
Are bawl'd in frequent cries through all the town,
Then judge the festival of Christmas near,
Christmas! the joyous period of the year:
Now with bright holly all your temples strow,
With laurel green and sacred mistletoe."]

" Comes flying forth from aile to aile about, (1)
" Sweet links of harmony and long drawn out." (2)
These were to him essentials; all things new
He deem'd superfluous, useless, or untrue;
To all beside indifferent, easy, cold,
Here the fire kindled, and the wo was told.
Habit with him was all the test of truth,
" It must be right: I've done it from my youth."
Questions he answer'd in as brief a way,
" It must be wrong — it was of yesterday."
Though mild benevolence our Priest possess'd,
'Twas but by wishes or by words express'd,
Circles in water, as they wider flow,
The less conspicuous in their progress grow,
And when at last they touch upon the shore,
Distinction ceases, and they're view'd no more.
His love, like that last circle, all embraced,
But with effect that never could be traced. (3)
Now rests our Vicar. They who knew him best,
Proclaim his life t'have been entirely rest;
Free from all evils which disturb his mind,
Whom studies vex and controversies bl nd.
The rich approved,—of them in awe he stood;
The poor admired,—they all believed him good;

(1) ["On cherub and on cherubim Full royally he rode,
And on the wings of mighty winds Came flying all abroad."]

(2) ["In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out."— MILTON.]

(3) ["Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race." — POPE.]

The old and serious of his habits spoke;
The frank and youthful loved his pleasant joke;
Mothers approved a safe contented guest,
And daughters one who back'd each small request:
In him his flock found nothing to condemn;
Him sectaries liked,—he never troubled them
No trifles fail'd his yielding mind to please,
And all his passions sunk in early ease;
Nor one so old has left this world of sin,
More like the being that he enter'd in.(1)

THE CURATE.

Ask you what lands our Pastor tithes?—Alas!
But few our acres, and but short our grass:
In some fat pastures of the rich, indeed,
May roll the single cow or favourite steed;
Who, stable-fed, is here for pleasure seen,
His sleek sides bathing in the dewy green;
But these, our hilly heath and common wide
Yield a slight portion for the parish-guide;
No crops luxuriant in our borders stand,
For here we plough the ocean, not the land;
Still reason wills that we our Pastor pay,
And custom does it on a certain day:

(1) ["The Vicar is an admirable sketch of what must be very difficult to draw;—a good, easy man, with no character at all. His little, humble vanity; his constant care to offend no one; his mawkish and feeble gallantry, indolent good-nature, and love of gossiping and trifling—are all very exactly and very pleasingly delineated,"—Jeffrey.]

Much is the duty, small the legal due,
And this with grateful minds we keep in view;
Each makes his off'ring, some by habit led,
Some by the thought, that all men must be fed;
Duty and love, and piety and pride,
Have each their force, and for the Priest provide.

Not thus our Curate, one whom all believe
Pious and just, and for whose fate they grieve;
All see him poor, but ev'n the vulgar know
He merits love, and their respect bestow.
A man so learn'd you shall but seldom see,
Nor one so honour'd, so aggrieved as he;—
Not grieved by years alone; though his appear
Dark and more dark; severer on severe:
Not in his need,—and yet we all must grant
How painful 'tis for feeling Age to want:
Nor in his body's sufferings; yet we know
Where Time has plough'd, there Misery loves to sow;
But in the wearied mind, that all in vain
Wars with distress, and struggles with its pain.

His Father saw his powers—"I'll give," quoth he,
"My first-born learning; 'twill a portion be:"
Unhappy gift! a portion for a son!
But all he had:—he learn'd, and was undone!

Better, apprenticed to an humble trade,
Had he the cassock for the priesthood made,
Or thrown the shuttle, or the saddle shaped,
And all these pangs of feeling souls escaped. (1)

(1) [Original edition:—

Oh! had he learn'd to make the wig he wears,
To throw the shuttle, or command the sheers,
Or the strong boar-skin for the saddle shaped,
What pangs, what terrors, had the Man escaped!]

He once had hope—Hope, ardent, lively, light;
His feelings pleasant, and his prospects bright:
Eager of fame, he read, he thought, he wrote,
Weigh'd the Greek page, and added note on note;
At morn, at evening at his work was he,
And dream'd what his Euripides would be.

Then care began:—he loved, he woo'd, he wed;
Hope cheer'd him still, and Hymen bless'd his bed—
A curate's bed! then came the woful years;
The husband's terrors, and the father's tears;
A wife grown feeble, mourning, pining, vex'd
With wants and woes—by daily cares perplex'd;
No more a help, a smiling, soothing aid,
But boding, drooping, sickly, and afraid.

A kind physician, and without a fee,
Gave his opinion—"Send her to the sea."
"Alas!" the good man answer'd, "can I send
"A friendless woman? Can I find a friend?
"No; I must with her, in her need, repair
"To that new place; the poor lie every where;—
"Some priest will pay me for my pious pains:"—
He said, he came, and here he yet remains.

Behold his dwelling! this poor hut he hires,
Where he from view, though not from want, retires;
Where four fair daughters, and five sorrowing sons,
Partake his sufferings, and dismiss his duns;
All join their efforts, and in patience learn
To want the comforts they aspire to earn;
For the sick mother something they'd obtain,
To soothe her grief and mitigate her pain;
For the sad father something they'd procure
To ease the burden they themselves endure.

Virtues like these at once delight and press
On the fond father with a proud distress;
On all around he looks with care and love,
Grieved to behold, but happy to approve.
Then from his care, his love, his grief he steals,
And by himself an Author's pleasure feels:
Each line detains him; he omits not one,
And all the sorrows of his state are gone.—(1)
Alas! even then, in that delicious hour,
He feels his fortune, and laments its power.
Some Tradesman's bill his wandering eyes engage,
Some scrawl for payment thrust 'twixt page and page;
Some bold, loud rapping at his humble door,
Some surly message he has heard before,
Awake, alarm, and tell him he is poor.
An angry Dealer, vulgar, rich, and proud,
Thinks of his bill, and, passing, raps aloud;
The elder daughter meekly makes him way—
"I want my money, and I cannot stay:
"My mill is stopp'd; what, Miss! I cannot grind;
'Go tell your father he must raise the wind:"

(1) ["There is a pleasure in poetic pains
Which only poets know. The shifts and turns,
Th' expedients and inventions, multiform,
To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms
Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win.
T' arrest the fleeting images that fill
The mirror of the mind, and hold them fast—
Are occupations of the poet's mind
So pleasing, and that steal away the thought
With such address from themes of sad import,
That, lost in his own musings, happy man!
He feels th' anxieties of life, denied
Their wonted entertainment, all retire."—COWPER.]

Still trembling, troubled, the dejected maid
Says, "Sir! my father!—" and then stops afraid:
Ev'n his hard heart is soften'd, and he hears
Her voice with pity; he respects her tears;
His stubborn features half admit a smile,
And his tone softens—"Well! I'll wait awhile."
Pity! a man so good, so mild, so meek,
At such an age, should have his bread to seek;
And all those rude and fierce attacks to dread,
That are more harrowing than the want of bread;
Ah! who shall whisper to that misery peace!
And say that want and insolence shall cease?
"But why not publish?"—those who know too well,
Dealers in Greek, are fearful 't will not sell;
Then he himself is timid, troubled, slow,
Nor likes his labours nor his griefs to show;
The hope of fame may in his heart have place,
But he has dread and horror of disgrace;
Nor has he that confiding, easy way,
That might his learning and himself display;
But to his work he from the world retreats,
And frets and glories o'er the favourite sheets.
But see! the Man himself; and sure I trace
Signs of new joy exulting in that face
O'er care that sleeps—we err, or we discern
Life in thy looks—the reason may we learn?
"Yes," he replied, "I'm happy, I confess,
"To learn that some are pleased with happiness
"Which others feel—there are who now combine
"The worthiest natures in the best design,
"To aid the letter'd poor, and soothe such ills as

" We who more keenly feel the world's contempt,
" And from its miseries are the least exempt;
" Now Hope shall whisper to the wounded breast,
" And Grief, in soothing expectation, rest.
" Yes, I am taught that men who think, who feel,
" Unite the pains of thoughtful men to heal;
" Not with disdainful pride, whose bounties make
" The needy curse the benefits they take;
" Not with the idle vanity that knows
" Only a selfish joy when it bestows;
" Not with o'erbearing wealth, that, in disdain,
" Hurls the superfluous bliss at groaning pain;
" But these are men who yield such blest relief,
" That with the grievance they destroy the grief;
" Their timely aid the needy sufferers find,
" Their generous manner soothes the suffering mind;
" There is a gracious bounty, form'd to raise
" Him whom it aids; their charity is praise;
" A common bounty may relieve distress,
" But whom the vulgar succour they oppress;
" This though a favour is an honour too,
" Though Mercy's duty, yet 'tis Merit's due;
" When our relief from such resources rise,
" All painful sense of obligation dies;
" And grateful feelings in the bosom wake,
" For 't is their offerings, not their alms, we take.
" Long may these founts of Charity remain,
" And never shrink, but to be fill'd again;
" True! to the Author they are now confined,
" To him who gave the treasure of his mind,
" His time, his health, — and thankless found mankind:

" But there is hope that from these founts may flow
" A side-way stream, and equal good bestow;
" Good that may reach us, whom the day's distress
" Keeps from the fame and perils of the Press;
" Whom Study beckons from the Ills of Life,
" And they from Study; melancholy strife!
" Who then can say, but bounty flow so free,
" And so diffused, may find its way to me?
" Yes! I may see my decent table yet
" Cheer'd with the meal that adds not to my debt;
" May talk of those to whom so much we owe,
" And guess their names whom yet we may not know;
" Blest, we shall say, are those who thus can give,
" And next who thus upon the bounty live;
" Then shall I close with thanks my humble meal,
" And feel so well—Oh, God! how shall I feel!"(1)

(1) The wants and mortifications of a poor clergyman are the subjects of one portion of this Letter; and he being represented as a stranger in the Borough, it may be necessary to make some apology for his appearance in the poem. Previous to a late meeting of a literary society, whose benevolent purpose is well known to the public, I was induced by a friend to compose a few verses, in which, with the general commendation of the design, should be introduced a hint that the bounty might be farther extended: these verses, a gentleman did me the honour to recite at the meeting, and they were printed as an extract from the poem, to which, in fact, they may be called an appendage.

[In the beginning of 1809, Dr. Cartwright having expressed a wish that Mr. Crabbe would prepare some verses to be repeated at the ensuing meeting of the Literary Fund; and a portion of the Borough, then in progress, being judged suitable for the occasion, it was accordingly forwarded to the Society, and recited at the anniversary, in April, by Matthew Browne, Esq. In the May following, the council and committee resolved, that a learned and officiating clergyman in distress, or an officiating clergyman, reduced and rendered incapable of duty, by age or infirmity, should be considered as a claimant on the fund.]

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IV.

SECTS AND PROFESSIONS IN RELIGION

. . . . . But cast your eyes again,
And view those errors which new sects maintain,
Or which of old disturb'd the Church's peaceful reign:
And we can point each period of the time
When they began and who begat the crime;
Can calculate how long th' eclipse endured;
Who interposed; what digits were obscured;
Of all which are already pass'd away,
We knew the rise, the progress, and decay.

DRYDEN. — *Hind and Panther.*

Oh, said the Hind, how many sons have you
Who call you mother, whom you never knew!
But most of them who that relation plead
Are such ungracious youths as wish you dead;
They gape at rich revenues which you hold,
And fain would nibble at your grandame gold.

Hind and Panther.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM now arrived at that part of my work, which I may expect will bring upon me some animadversion. Religion is a subject deeply interesting to the minds of many, and when these minds are weak, they are often led by a warmth of feeling into the violence of causeless resentment: I am therefore anxious that my purpose should be understood; and I wish to point out what things they are which an author may hold up to ridicule and be blameless. In referring to the two principal divisions of enthusiastical teachers, I have denominated them, as I conceive they are generally called, *Calvinistic* and *Arminian* Methodists. The *Arminians*, though divided and perhaps subdivided, are still, when particular accuracy is not intended, considered as one body, having had, for many years, one head, who is yet held in high respect by the varying members of the present day: but the Calvinistic societies are to be looked upon rather as separate and independent congregations; and it is to one of these (unconnected, as is supposed, with any other) I more particularly allude. But while I am making use of this division, I must entreat that I may not be considered as one who takes upon him to censure the religious opinions of any society or individual:

the reader will find that the spirit of the enthusiast, and not his opinions, his manners, and not his creed, have engaged my attention. I have nothing to observe of the Calvinist and Arminian, considered as such; but my remarks are pointed at the enthusiast and the bigot, at their folly and their craft.

To those readers who have seen the journals of the first Methodists, or the extracts quoted from them by their opposers (1) in the early times of this spiritual influenza, are sufficiently known all their leading notions and peculiarities; so that I have no need to enter into such unpleasant enquiries in this place. I have only to observe, that their tenets remain the same, and have still the former effect on the minds of the converted: there is yet that imagined contention with the powers of darkness, that is at once so lamentable and so ludicrous: there is the same offensive familiarity with the Deity, with a full trust and confidence both in the immediate efficacy of their miserably delivered supplications, and in the reality of numberless small miracles wrought at their request and for their convenience; there still exists that delusion, by which some of the most common diseases of the body are regarded as proofs of the malignity of Satan contending for dominion over the soul; and there still remains the same wretched jargon, composed of scriptural language, debased by vulgar expressions, which has a kind of mystic influence on the minds of the ignorant.

(1) Methodists and Papists compared; Treatise on Grace by Bishop Warburton, &c.

It will be recollected that it is the abuse of those scriptural terms which I conceive to be improper: they are doubtless most significant and efficacious when used with propriety; but it is painful to the mind of a soberly devout person, when he hears every rise and fall of the animal spirits, every whim and notion of enthusiastic ignorance, expressed in the venerable language of the Apostles and Evangelists.

The success of these people is great, but not surprising: as the powers they claim are given, and come not of education, many may, and therefore do, fancy they are endowed with them; so that they who do not venture to become preachers, yet exert the minor gifts, and gain reputation for the faculty of prayer, as soon as they can address the Creator in daring flights of unpremeditated absurdity. The less indigent gain the praise of hospitality, and the more harmonious become distinguished in their choirs; curiosity is kept alive by succession of ministers, and self-love is flattered by the consideration that they are the persons at whom the world wonders; add to this, that, in many of them, pride is gratified by their consequence as new members of a sect whom their conversion pleases, and by the liberty, which as seceders they take of speaking contemptuously of the Church and ministers whom they have relinquished.

Of those denominated *Calvinistic Methodists*, I had principally one sect in view, or, to adopt the term of its founder, *a church*. This *church* consists of several congregations in town and country,

unknown perhaps in many parts of the kingdom, but, where known, the cause of much curiosity and some amusement. To such of my readers as may judge an enthusiastic teacher and his peculiarities to be unworthy any serious attention, I would observe, that there is something unusually daring in the boast of this man, who claims the authority of a messenger sent from God, and declares without hesitation that his call was immediate; that he is assisted by the sensible influence of the Spirit, and that miracles are perpetually wrought in his favour and for his convenience.

As it was and continues to be my desire to give proof that I had advanced nothing respecting this extraordinary person, his operations or assertions, which might not be readily justified by quotations from his own writings, I had collected several of these, and disposed them under certain heads; but I found that by this means a very disproportioned share of attention must be given to the subject, and, after some consideration, I have determined to relinquish the design; and should any have curiosity to search whether my representation of the temper and disposition, the spirit and manners, the knowledge and capacity, of a very popular teacher be correct, he is referred to about fourscore pamphlets (1), whose titles will be found on the covers

(1) ["The Works of the Rev. William Huntington, S.S., Minister of the Gospel, at Providence Chapel, Gray's Inn Lane," were published in 1820, in *twenty* volumes octavo; the most extraordinary part of their contents being the tract entitled "*God the Guardian of the Poor and the Bank of Faith; or, a Display of the Providences of God, which have, at sundry times, attended the Author.*" — "This," says Southey, "is a production equally singular and curious. There is nothing like it in the

of the late editions of the *Bank of Faith*, itself a wonderful performance, which (according to the

whole bibliotheca of knavery and fanaticism. One day, when he had nothing but bread in the house, he was moved by the Spirit to take a bye-path, where he had never gone before; but the reason was, that a stoat was to kill a fine large rabbit, just in time for him to secure his prey. At one time, where there was no tea in the house, and they had neither money nor credit, his wife bade the nurse set the kettle on in faith, and before it boiled, a stranger brought a present of tea to the door. At another time, a friend, without solicitation, gives him half a guinea when he was penniless; and, lest he should have any difficulty in obtaining change for it, when he crossed Kingston Bridge, he cast his eyes on the ground, and finds a penny to pay the toll. He wants a new parsonic livery; 'wherefore,' says he, 'in humble prayer I told my most blessed Lord and master that my year was out, and my apparel bad; that I had nowhere to go for these things but to him; and as he had promised to give his servants food and raiment, I hoped he would fulfil his promise to me, though one of the worst of them.' So he called upon a certain person, and the raggedness of his apparel led to a conversation which ended in the offer of a new suit, and a great coat to boot. Being now in much request, and having 'many doors open to him for preaching the gospel very wide apart,' he began to want a horse, then to wish, and lastly to pray, for one. 'I used my prayers,' he says, 'as gunners use their swivels, turning them every way as the various cases required;' before the day was over, he was presented with a horse. 'I told God,' says he, 'that I had more work for my faith now than heretofore; for the horse would cost half as much to keep him as my whole family. In answer to which, this scripture came to my mind with power and comfort, 'Dwell in the land and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed.' This was a bank-note put into the hand of my faith, which, when I got poor, I pleaded before God, and he answered it. Having now had my horse for some time, and riding a great deal every week, I soon wore my breeches out, so that they were not fit to ride in. I hope the reader will excuse my mentioning the word *breeches*, which I should have avoided, had not this passage of scripture obtruded into my mind, just as I had resolved in my own thoughts not to mention this kind providence of God: 'And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs shall they reach: and they shall be upon Aaron and his sons, &c. Exod. xxviii. 42. By which and three others, namely, Exek. xliv. 18. Lev. vi. 10. and Lev. xvi. 4., I saw that it was no crime to mention the word breeches, nor the way in which God sent them to me; Aaron and his sons being clothed entirely by Providence; and as God himself condescended to give orders what they should be made of, and how they should be cut: and I believe the same God ordered mine. I often made very free in my prayers with my invaluable master for this favour; but he still kept me so amazingly poor, that I could not get them at any rate. At last I was determined to go to a friend of mine at Kingston, who is of that branch

turn of mind in the reader) will either highly excite or totally extinguish curiosity. In these works will be abundantly seen, abuse and contempt of the Church of England and its ministers; vengeance and virulent denunciation against all offenders; scorn for morality and heathen virtue, with that kind of learning which the author possesses, and his peculiar style of composition. A few of the titles placed below will give some information to the reader respecting the merit and design of those performances. (1)

As many of the preacher's subjects are controverted and nice questions in divinity, he has some-

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of business, to bespeak a pair; and to get him to trust me until my master sent me money to pay him. I was that day going to London, fully determined to bespeak them, as I rode through the town. However, when I passed the shop I forgot it; but when I came to London, I called on Mr. Croucher, a shoemaker, in Shepherd's Market, who told me a parcel was left there for me, but what it was he knew not. I opened it, and behold there was a pair of leather breeches, with a note in them! the substance of which was as follows: 'Sir, I have sent you a pair of breeches, and hope they will fit.' I wrote an answer to the note to this effect: 'I received your present, and thank you for it. I was going to order a pair of leather breeches to be made, because I did not know that my Master had bespoke them of you. They fit very well, which fully convinces me that the same God who moved thy heart to give, guided thy hand to cut: because he perfectly knows my size, having clothed me in a miraculous way, for near five years!" The plan of purveying for himself by prayer, with the help of hints in the proper place and season, answered so well, that he soon obtained, by the same means, a new bed, a rug, a pair of new blankets, doe-skin gloves, and a horseman's coat. His wife also tried her fortune, and with good success: gowns came as they were wanted, hampers of bacon and cheese, now and then a large ham, and now and then a guinea; all which things he calls precious answers to prayer."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xxiv.]

(1) Barbar, in two parts; Bond-Child; Cry of Little Faith; Satan's Lawsuit; Forty Stripes for Satan; Myrrh and Odour of Saints; the Naked Bow of God; Rule and Riddle; Way and Fare for Wayfaring Men; Utility of the Books and Excellency of the Parchments; Correspondence between *Noctua, Aurita* (the words so separated), and *Philomela*, &c.

times allowed himself relaxation from the severity of study, and favoured his admirers with the effects of an humbler kind of inspiration, viz. that of the Muse. It must be confessed that these flights of fancy are very humble, and have nothing of that daring and mysterious nature which the prose of the author leads us to expect. (1) *The Dimensions of eternal* LOVE is a title of one of his more learned productions, with which might have been expected (as a fit companion), *The Bounds of infinite Grace;* but no such work appears, and possibly the author considered one attempt of this kind was sufficient to prove the extent and direction of his abilities.

Of the whole of this mass of enquiry and decision, of denunciation and instruction (could we suppose it read by intelligent persons), different opinions would probably be formed: the more indignant and severe would condemn the whole as the produce of craft and hypocrisy, while the more lenient would allow that such things might originate in the wandering imagination of a dreaming enthusiast.

None of my readers will, I trust, do me so much injustice as to suppose I have here any other motive than a vindication of what I have advanced in the verses which describe this kind of character, or that I had there any other purpose than to express (what I conceive to be) justifiable indignation

(1) [One of his poetical productions is described in the title-page, as

" A clownish poem on the Shunamite,
A sinner call'd to be the Lord's delight;
By the despised William Huntington,
Both known and trusted now in Paddington."]

against the assurance, the malignity, and (what is of more importance) the pernicious influence of such sentiments on the minds of the simple and ignorant, who, if they give credit to his relations, must be no more than tools and instruments, under the control and management of one *called to be their Apostle.*

Nothing would be more easy for me, as I have observed, than to bring forward quotations such as would justify all I have advanced; but even had I room, I cannot tell whether there be not something degrading in such kind of attack: the reader might smile at those miraculous accounts, but he would consider them and the language of the author as beneath his further attention: I therefore once more refer him to those pamphlets, which will afford matter for pity and for contempt, by which some would be amused and others astonished—not without sorrow, when they reflect that thousands look up to the writer as a man literally inspired, to whose wants they administer with their substance, and to whose guidance they prostrate their spirit and understanding. (1).

(1) ["When, in October, 1805, Mr. Crabbe resumed the charge of his own parish of Muston, he found some changes to vex him, and not the less, because he had too much reason to suspect that his long absence from his incumbency had been, partly at least, the cause of them. His cure had been served by respectable and diligent clergymen, but they had been often changed, and some of them had never resided within the parish; and he felt that the binding influence of a settled and permanent minister had not been withdrawn for twelve years with impunity. A Wesleyan missionary had formed a thriving establishment in Muston, and the congregations at the parish church were no longer such as they had been of old. This much annoyed him; and the warmth with which he began to preach against dissent only irritated himself and others, without bringing back disciples to the fold. But the progress of the Wesleyans, of all sects

the least unfriendly in feeling, as well as the least dissimilar in tenets, to the established church, was, after all, a slight vexation compared to what he underwent from witnessing the much more limited success of a disciple of Huntington in spreading in the same neighbourhood the pernicious fanaticism of his half-crazy master The *social* and *moral* effects of that new mission were well calculated to excite not only regret, but indignation; and, among other distressing incidents, was the departure from his own household of two servants, a woman and a man, one of whom had been employed by him for twenty years. The man, a conceited ploughman, set up for a Huntingtonian preacher himself; and the woman, whose moral character had been sadly deteriorated since her adoption of the new lights, was at last obliged to be dismissed, in consequence of intolerable insolence."—Vol. I. p. 182.

On the passages in Letter IV., treating of Methodism, the Eclectic Review said:—"Mr. Crabbe's representation of the Methodists in general, as addressing the Creator with daring flights of unpremeditated absurdity, if intended to apply indiscriminately, can only be excused, by supposing the writer ignorant and rash, instead of malicious and unprincipled. There is too much truth in his strictures on the author of the 'Bank of Faith.' The Arminian Methodists afford him as much amusement as the Calvinists. He makes no scruple of turning their internal conflicts, as well as the tenour and influence of their leader's preaching, into general and unqualified ridicule. The 'truth divine' is not secured from his satire, by the supreme authority of that 'Teacher', who thought proper to illustrate the spiritual change by this striking figure, and the evil spirit, solemnly described by an apostle as 'a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,' is ludicrously exhibited in Mr. Crabbe's verse as a dragon of romance,

> 'Whom sainted knights attack in sinners' cause,
> And force the wounded victim from his paws.'"

With reference to the above strictures, the Poet added the following note in his third edition of the Borough:—"An objection is made to the levity with which the subject of religion is said to be treated in this letter. This the author cannot admit: it is not religion, but what hurts religion, what is injurious to all true devotion, and at enmity with all sober sense, which is thus unceremoniously treated: false and bigoted zeal; weak and obstinate enthusiasm, ignorance that presumes to teach, and intolerant pride that boasts of humility; these alone are objects of his attack. An author has not the less reverence for religion, because, in warring with fanaticism, he uses the only weapons by which it is said to be vulnerable; and he doubts not but he shall be excused (nay, approved, so far as respects his intention) by the public in general, and more especially by that part of it (and that by no means a small part), who think the persons so described, while they are themselves—

> 'Safe from the Bar, the Pulpit, and the Throne,'

are the very people, from whom, did their power correspond with their wishes, neither the Pulpit nor the Throne (if the Bar should escape) would remain in safety."]

Sects and Professions in Religion are numerous and successive — General Effect of false Zeal — Deists — Fanatical Idea of Church Reformers — The Church of Rome — Baptists — Swedenborgians — Universalists — Jews.

Methodists of two Kinds; Calvinistic and Arminian.

The Preaching of a Calvinistic Enthusiast — His Contempt of Learning — Dislike to sound Morality: why — His Idea of Conversion — His Success and Pretensions to Humility.

The Arminian Teacher of the older Flock — Their Notions of the Operations and Power of Satan — Description of his Devices — Their Opinion of regular Ministers — Comparison of these with the Preacher himself — A Rebuke to his Hearers; introduces a Description of the powerful Effects of the Word in the early and awakening Days of Methodism.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IV.

SECTS AND PROFESSIONS IN RELIGION.

"SECTS in Religion?"—Yes, of every race
We nurse some portion in our favour'd place;
Not one warm preacher of one growing sect
Can say our Borough treats him with neglect;
Frequent as fashions, they with us appear,
And you might ask, "how think we for the year?"
They come to us as riders in a trade, (1)
And with much art exhibit and persuade.

(1) ["The fact is curious in the history of trade, and little known, that the practice of travelling about the country to solicit orders for goods, began among the Quakers, as an incidental consequence of the life led by their errant-preachers: Francis Bugg, of unsavoury name, tells us this. 'We no sooner had our liberty,' he says, 'but all our London preachers spread themselves, like locusts, all over England and Wales. Some went east, some west, yea, north and south; and being generally tradesmen, we not only got our quarters free, our horses free and well maintained in our travels; a silver watch here, a beaver there, a piece of hair-camblet, and sometimes other things; but, moreover, we got into great trades; and, by spreading ourselves in the country, into great acquaintance, and thereby received orders of the best of the country tradesmen for parcels, whilst the Protestant tradesmen in London, who had not this advantage, stood still,

Minds are for Sects of various kinds decreed,
As diff'rent soils are form'd for diff'rent seed;
Some when converted sigh in sore amaze,
And some are wrapt in joy's ecstatic blaze;
Others again will change to each extreme,
They know not why—as hurried in a dream;
Unstable they, like water, take all forms,
Are quick and stagnant; have their calms and storms;
High on the hills, they in the sunbeams glow,
Then muddily they move debased and slow;
Or cold and frozen rest, and neither rise nor flow.

Yet none the cool and prudent Teacher prize,
On him they dote who wakes their ecstasies;
With passions ready primed such guide they meet,
And warm and kindle with th' imparted heat;
'T is he who wakes the nameless strong desire,
The melting rapture and the glowing fire;
'T is he who pierces deep the tortured breast,
And stirs the terrors, never more to rest.

Opposed to these we have a prouder kind,
Rash without heat, and without raptures blind;
These our *Glad Tidings* unconcern'd peruse,
Search without awe, and without fear refuse;
The truths, the blessings found in Sacred Writ,
Call forth their spleen, and exercise their wit;
Respect from these nor saints nor martyrs gain,
The zeal they scorn, and they deride the pain;

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and in their shops had little to do, whilst we filled our coffers. Witness Thomas Greene, whose wife would scarce suffer him at home, she being willing (according to the proverb), to make hay whilst the sun shines. Thomas died worth, as is said, six or eight thousand pounds, who was a poor mason when he set up for a preaching Quaker.'"—SOUTHEY.]

And take their transient, cool, contemptuous view,
Of that which must be tried, and doubtless *may be true.*
Friends of our Faith we have, whom doubts like these
And keen remarks, and bold objections please;
They grant such doubts have weaker minds oppress'd,
Till sound conviction gave the troubled rest.
"But still," they cry, "let none their censures spare,
" They but confirm the glorious hopes we share;
" From doubt, disdain, derision, scorn, and lies
" With five-fold triumph sacred Truth shall rise."
Yes! I allow, so Truth shall stand at last,
And gain fresh glory by the conflict past:—
As Solway-Moss (a barren mass and cold,
Death to the seed, and poison to the fold),
The smiling plain and fertile vale o'erlaid,
Choked the green sod, and kill'd the springing blade;
That, changed by culture, may in time be seen,
Enrich'd by golden grain, and pasture green;
And these fair acres rented and enjoy'd
May those excel by Solway-Moss destroy'd. (1)

(1) ["Solway-Moss is a flat area, about seven miles in circumference. The substance of it is a gross fluid, composed of mud and the putrid fibres of heath, diluted by internal springs, which arise in every part. The surface is a dry crust, covered with moss and rushes, offering a fair appearance over an unsound bottom. On the south, the Moss is bounded by a cultivated plain, which declines gently through the space of a mile to the river Esk. This plain is lower than the moss, being separated from it by a breastwork, formed by digging peat, which makes an irregular, though perpendicular, line of low black boundary.—"On the 13th of November, 1771, in a dark tempestuous night, the inhabitants of the plain were alarmed with a dreadful crash; many of them were then in the fields watching their cattle, lest the Esk, which was then rising violently in the storm, should carry them off. In the meantime, the enormous mass of

Still must have mourn'd the tenant of the day,
For hopes destroy'd, and harvests swept away;
To him the gain of future years unknown,
The instant grief and suffering were his own:
So must I grieve for many a wounded heart,
Chill'd by those doubts which bolder minds impart:
Truth in the end shall shine divinely clear,
But sad the darkness till those times appear;
Contests for truth, as wars for freedom, yield
Glory and joy to those who gain the field:
But still the Christian must in pity sigh
For all who suffer, and uncertain die.

Here are, who all the Church maintains approve,
But yet the Church herself they will not love;
In angry speech, they blame the carnal tie,
Which pure Religion lost her spirit by;
What time from prisons, flames, and tortures led,
She slumber'd careless in a royal bed;
To make, they add, the Church's glory shine,
Should Diocletian reign, not Constantine.

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fluid substance, which had burst from the moss, moved on, spreading itself more and more as it got possession of the plain. Some of the inhabitants, through the terror of the night, could plainly discover it advancing like a moving hill. This was, in fact, the case; for the gush of mud carried before it, through the first two or three hundred yards of its course, a part of the breastwork; which, though low, was yet several feet in perpendicular height; but it soon deposited this solid mass, and became a heavy fluid. One house after another it spread round, filled, and crushed into ruins, just giving time to the terrified inhabitants to escape. Scarcely any thing was saved except their lives; nothing of their furniture, few of their cattle. This dreadful inundation, though the first shock of it was most tremendous, continued still spreading for many weeks, till it covered the whole plain, an area of five hundred acres, and like molten lead poured into a mould, filled all the hollows of it, lying in some parts thirty or forty feet deep, reducing the whole to one level surface." — GILPIN.]

"In pomp," they cry, "is England's Church array'd,
"Her cool Reformers wrought like men afraid;
"We would have pull'd her gorgeous temples down,
"And spurn'd her mitre, and defiled her gown;
"We would have trodden low both bench and stall,
"Nor left a tithe remaining, great or small."
Let us be serious—Should such trials come,
Are they themselves prepared for martyrdom?
It seems to us that our reformers knew
Th' important work they undertook to do;
An equal priesthood they were loth to try,
Lest zeal and care should with ambition die;
To them it seem'd that, take the tenth away,
Yet priests must eat, and you must feed or pay:
Would they indeed, who hold such pay in scorn,
Put on the muzzle when they tread the corn?
Would they all, gratis, watch and tend the fold,
Nor take one fleece to keep them from the cold?
Men are not equal, and 't is meet and right
That robes and titles our respect excite;
Order requires it; 'tis by vulgar pride
That such regard is censured and denied;
Or by that false enthusiastic zeal,
That thinks the Spirit will the priest reveal,
And show to all men, by their powerful speech,
Who are appointed and inspired to teach:
Alas! could we the dangerous rule believe,
Whom for their teacher should the crowd receive?
Since all the varying kinds demand respect,
All press you on to join their chosen sect,

Although but in this single point agreed,
" Desert your churches and adopt our creed.'
We know full well how much our forms offend
The burthen'd Papist and the simple Friend;
Him, who new robes for every service takes,
And who in drab and beaver sighs and shakes;
He on the priest, whom hood and band adorn,
Looks with the sleepy eye of silent scorn;
But him I would not for my friend and guide,
Who views such things with spleen, or wears with pride.

See next our several Sects, — but first behold
The Church of Rome, who here is poor and old:
Use not triumphant rail'ry, or, at least,
Let not thy mother be a whore and beast;
Great was her pride indeed in ancient times,
Yet shall we think of nothing but her crimes?
Exalted high above all earthly things,
She placed her foot upon the neck of kings;
But some have deeply since avenged the crown,
And thrown her glory and her honours down;
Nor neck nor ear can she of kings command,
Nor place a foot upon her own fair land.

Among her sons, with us a quiet few,
Obscure themselves, her ancient state review,
And fond and melancholy glances cast
On power insulted, and on triumph past:
They look, they can but look, with many a sigh,
On sacred buildings doom'd in dust to lie;
" On seats," they tell, " where priests mid tapers dim
" Breathed the warm prayer, or tuned the midnight hymn;

" Where trembling penitents their guilt confess'd,
" Where want had succour, and contrition rest;
" There weary men from trouble found relief,
" There men in sorrow found repose from grie
" To scenes like these the fainting soul retired;
" Revenge and anger in these cells expired;
" By pity soothed, remorse lost half her fears,
" And soften'd pride dropp'd penitential tears.
" Then convent walls and nunnery spires arose,
" In pleasant spots which monk or abbot chose;
" When counts and barons saints devoted fed,
And making cheap exchange had pray'r for bread.
" Now all is lost, the earth where abbeys stood
" Is layman's land, the glebe, the stream, the wood;
" His oxen low where monks retired to eat,
" His cows repose upon the prior's seat;
" And wanton doves within the cloisters bill,
" Where the chaste votary warr'd with wanton will."
Such is the change they mourn, but they restrain
The rage of grief, and passively complain.
We've Baptists old and new (1); forbear to ask
What the distinction — I decline the task;
This I perceive, that when a sect grows old,
Converts are few, and the converted cold:
First comes the hot-bed heat, and while it glows
The plants spring up, and each with vigour grows;
Then comes the cooler day, and though awhile
The verdure prospers and the blossoms smile,

(1) [" The English Baptists are divided into two classes: one, that of the *General* Baptists, or Remonstrants, because they believe that God has excluded no man from salvation by any sovereign decree; the other are called *Particular*, or Calvinistic Baptists, because they agree very nearly with the Calvinists, or Presbyterians, in their religious sentiments."—MOSHEIM.]

Yet poor the fruit, and form'd by long delay,
Nor will the profits for the culture pay;
The skilful gard'ner then no longer stops,
But turns to other beds for bearing crops.

Some Swedenborgians in our streets are found,
Those wandering walkers on enchanted ground,
Who in our world can other worlds survey,
And speak with spirits though confined in clay:
Of Bible-mysteries they the keys possess,
Assured themselves, where wiser men but guess:
'T is theirs to see around, about, above, —
How spirits mingle thoughts, and angels move;
Those whom our grosser views from us exclude,
To them appear — a heavenly multitude;
While the dark sayings, seal'd to men like us,
Their priests interpret, and their flocks discuss. (1)

But while these gifted men, a favour'd fold,
New powers exhibit and new worlds behold;
Is there not danger lest their minds confound
The pure above them with the gross around?

(1) [Baron Swedenborg, the founder of the "New Jerusalem Church," asserts, that in the year 1743, the Lord manifested himself to him in a personal appearance, and at the same time opened his spiritual eyes, so that he was enabled constantly to see and converse with celestial beings. "As often," says he, "as I conversed with angels face to face, it was in their habitations, which are like to our houses on earth, but far more beautiful and magnificent; having rooms, chambers, and apartments in great variety, & also spacious courts belonging to them, together with gardens, parterres of flowers, fields, &c., where the angels are formed into societies. They dwell in contiguous habitations, disposed after the manner of our cities, in streets, walks, and squares. I have had the privilege to walk through them, to examine all around them, and to enter their houses." The baron and his followers also hold, that the sacred scripture contains three distinct senses, viz. the celestial, the spiritual, and the natural, all united by correspondencies — of which correspondencies the Swedenborgians alone possess the key. See his "Universal Theology," and "Treatise concerning Heaven and Hell."]

May not these Phaëtons, who thus contrive
'Twixt heaven above and earth beneath to drive,
When from their flaming chariots they descend,
The worlds they visit in their fancies blend?
Alas! too sure on both they bring disgrace,
Their earth is crazy, and their heaven is base.
We have, it seems, who treat, and doubtless well,
Of a chastising not awarding Hell;
Who are assured that an offended God
Will cease to use the thunder and the rod;
A soul on earth, by crime and folly stain'd,
When here corrected has improvement gain'd;
In other state still more improved to grow,
And nobler powers in happier world to know;
New strength to use in each divine employ,
And more enjoying, looking to more joy.(1)
A pleasing vision! could we thus be sure
Polluted souls would be at length so pure
The view is happy, we may think it just,
It may be true—but who shall add, it must?
To the plain words and sense of Sacred Writ,
With all my heart I reverently submit;
But where it leaves me doubtful, I 'm afraid
To call conjecture to my reason's aid;

(1) ["The Universalists teach the universal grace of God towards all apostate men; and consequently an universal atonement, and a call to all men. They are divided into two classes. Some ascribe to the means of grace which God affords, sufficient power to enlighten and sanctify all men; and teach, that it depends on the voluntary conduct of men, whether the grace of God shall produce its effects on them or not. Others maintain, that God indeed wishes to make all men happy, only on the condition of their believing; and that this faith originates from the sovereign and irresistible operation of God." — Mosheim.]

Thy thoughts, thy ways, great God! are not as mine,
And to thy mercy I my soul resign.
Jews are with us, but far unlike to those,
Who, led by David, warr'd with Israel's foes;
Unlike to those whom his imperial son
Taught truths divine—the Preacher Solomon
Nor war nor wisdom yield our Jews delight;
They will not study, and they dare not fight. (1)
These are, with us, a slavish, knavish crew,
Shame and dishonour to the name of Jew;
The poorest masters of the meanest arts,
With cunning heads, and cold and cautious hearts;
They grope their dirty way to petty gains,
While poorly paid for their nefarious pains.
Amazing race! deprived of land and laws,
A general language, and a public cause;
With a religion none can now obey,
With a reproach that none can take away:
A people still, whose common ties are gone;
Who, mix'd with every race, are lost in none.
What said their Prophet? — "Shouldst thou disobey,
"The Lord shall take thee from thy land away;
"Thou shalt a by-word and a proverb be,
"And all shall wonder at thy woes and thee;
"Daughter and son, shalt thou, while captive, have,
"And see them made the bond-maid and the slave;
"He, whom thou leav'st, the Lord thy God, shall bring
"War to thy country on an eagle-wing.

(1) Some may object to this assertion; to whom I beg leave to answer that I do not use the word *fight* in the sense of the Jew Mendoza.

" A people strong and dreadful to behold,
" Stern to the young, remorseless to the old;
' Masters whose speech thou canst not understand,
" By cruel signs shall give the harsh command:
" Doubtful of life shalt thou by night, by day,
" For grief, and dread, and trouble pine away;
" Thy evening wish,—Would God I saw the sun!
" Thy morning sigh,—Would God the day were done! (1)
" Thus shalt thou suffer, and to distant times
" Regret thy misery, and lament thy crimes."

A part there are, whom doubtless man might trust,
Worthy as wealthy, pure, religious, just;
They who with patience, yet with rapture, look
On the strong promise of the Sacred Book:
As unfulfill'd th' endearing words they view,
And blind to truth, yet own their prophets true; (2)

(1) See the Book of Deuteronomy, chap. xxviii.—[" If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, thou shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth: and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations, whither the Lord shall lead thee. Thy sons and thy daughters shall go into captivity. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young; and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! "]

(2) [When I turn my thoughts to the past and present situation of this peculiar people, I do not see how any Christian nation, according to the spirit of their religion, *can* refuse admission to the Jews, who, in completion of those very prophecies on which Christianity rests, are to be scattered and disseminated amongst all people and nations over the face of the earth. The sin and obduracy of their forefathers are amongst the undoubted records of our gospel; but I doubt if this can be a sufficient reason why we should hold them in such general odium through so many ages, seeing how naturally the son follows the faith of the father, and how much too general

Well pleased they look for Sion's coming state,
Nor think of Julian's boast and Julian's fate. (1)
More might I add; I might describe the flocks
Made by Seceders from the ancient stocks;
Those who will not to any guide submit,
Nor find one creed to their conceptions fit—
Each sect, they judge, in something goes astray,
And every church has lost the certain way; (2)
Then for themselves they carve out creed and laws,
And weigh their atoms, and divide their straws.
A Sect remains, which, though divided long
In hostile parties, both are fierce and strong,
And into each enlists a warm and zealous throng.

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a thing it is amongst mankind to profess any particular form of religion, that devolves upon them by inheritance, rather than by free election and conviction of reason, founded upon examination.— CUMBERLAND.]

(1) His boast, that he would rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem: his fate (whatever becomes of the miraculous part of the story), that he died before the foundation was laid.—["An edict was issued by Julian for the rebuilding of the Temple on Mount Moriah, and the restoration of the Jewish worship in its original splendour. The whole Jewish world was in commotion; they crowded from the most distant quarters to be present and assist in the great national work. Their wealth was poured forth in lavish profusion. Men cheerfully surrendered the hard-won treasures of their avarice: women offered up the ornaments of their vanity. Already was the work commenced; already had they dug down to a considerable depth, and were preparing to lay the foundation, when suddenly flames of fire came bursting from the centre of the hill, accompanied with terrific explosions. The affrighted workmen fled on all sides: and the labours were suspended at once by this unforeseen and awful sign. The discomfiture of the Jews was completed; and the resumption of their labours, could they have recovered from their panic, was for ever broken off by the death of Julian."— MILMAN.]

(2) [Original edition:—

True Independents: while they Calvin hate,
They heed as little what Socinians state;
They judge Arminians, Antinomians stray,
Nor England's Church, nor Church on earth obey.]

Soon as they rose in fame, the strife arose,
The Calvinistic these, th' Arminian those;
With Wesley some remain'd, the remnant Whitfield chose.
Now various leaders both the parties take,
And the divided hosts their new divisions make. (1)
See yonder Preacher (2)! to his people pass,
Borne up and swell'd by tabernacle-gas;
Much he discourses, and of various points,
All unconnected, void of limbs and joints;
He rails, persuades, explains, and moves the will
By fierce bold words, and strong mechanic skill.
"That Gospel, Paul with zeal and love maintain'd,
"To others lost, to you is now explain'd;
"No worldly learning can these points discuss,
"Books teach them not as they are taught to us.
"Illiterate call us! — let their wisest man
"Draw forth his thousands as your Teacher can:

(1) [While Wesley was actively engaged in establishing the influence of the Methodists, and extending the number of his converts, he received a painful wound in an unexpected quarter, from the pertinacity with which Whitfield and a considerable proportion of his disciples adhered to the peculiar doctrine of Calvin, and opposed Wesley's extravagant notion of the possibility of sinless perfection being attained in the present life. They were, however, soon personally reconciled; but the difference remained as to doctrine: their respective followers were, according to custom, less charitable than themselves; and never was man more bitterly reviled, insulted, and misrepresented, than Wesley was through the remainder of his life by the Calvinistic Methodists. — SOUTHEY.]

(2) [William Huntington was the son of a day-labourer in the Weald of Kent. The early part of his life was passed in menial service and other humble occupations. After rioting in every low vice for several years, he was, according to his own account, suddenly and miraculously converted, and became a preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. Having lost his first wife, he married the rich widow of Sir James Saunderson, a London alderman, and passed the latter part of his life in affluence. He died in 1813. See *ante*, p. 68. and *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxiv.]

" They give their moral precepts: so, they say,
" Did Epictetus once, and Seneca;
" One was a slave, and slaves we all must be,
" Until the Spirit comes and sets us free.
" Yet hear you nothing from such man but works;
" They make the Christian service like the Turks'.
" Hark to the Churchman: day by day he cries,
" ' Children of Men, be virtuous and be wise;
" ' Seek patience, justice, temp'rance, meekness, truth;
" ' In age be courteous, be sedate in youth.' —
" So they advise, and when such things be read,
" How can we wonder that their flocks are dead?
" The Heathens wrote of Virtue; they could dwell
' On such light points: in them it might be well;
" They might for virtue strive; but I maintain,
" Our strife for virtue would be proud and vain.
" When Samson carried Gaza's gates so far,
" Lack'd he a helping hand to bear the bar?
" Thus the most virtuous must in bondage groan;
" Samson is grace, and carries all alone. (1)
" Hear you not priests their feeble spirits spend,
" In bidding Sinners turn to God, and mend;
" To check their passions and to walk aright,
" To run the Race, and fight the glorious Fight?
" Nay more—to pray, to study, to improve,
" To grow in goodness, to advance in love?

(1) Whoever has attended to the books or preaching of these enthusiastic people must have observed much of this kind of absurd and foolish application of scripture history: it seems to them as reasoning.

" Oh! Babes and Sucklings, dull of heart and slow,
" Can Grace be gradual? Can Conversion grow?
" The work is done by instantaneous call;
" Converts at once are made, or not at all;
" Nothing is left to grow, reform, amend,
" The first emotion is the Movement's end:
" If once forgiven, Debt can be no more;
' If once adopted, will the heir be poor?
" The man who gains the twenty-thousand prize,
" Does he by little and by little rise?
" There can no fortune for the Soul be made,
" By peddling cares and savings in her trade.
" Why are our sins forgiven?—Priests reply,
" —' Because by Faith on Mercy we rely;
" ' Because, believing, we repent and pray.'—
" Is this their doctrine?—then they go astray:
" We 're pardon'd neither for belief nor deed,
" For faith nor practice, principle nor creed;
" Nor for our sorrow for our former sin,
" Nor for our fears when better thoughts begin;
" Nor prayers nor penance in the cause avail,
" All strong remorse, all soft contrition fail;—
" It is the *Call!* till that proclaims us free,
" In darkness, doubt, and bondage we must be;
" Till that *assures* us, we 've in vain endured,
" And all is over when we 're once assured. (1)

(1) ["A certain captain John Underhill affirmed, that, having long lain under a spirit of bondage, he could get no assurance; till, at length, as he was taking a pipe of tobacco, the Spirit set home upon him an absolute promise of free grace, with such assurance and joy, that he had never since doubted of his good estate, neither should he, whatever sins he might fall into. And he endeavoured to prove, that, as the Lord was

" This is Conversion:—First there comes a cry
" Which utters, ' Sinner, thou'rt condemn'd to die;
" Then the struck soul to every aid repairs,
" To church and altar, ministers and prayers;
" In vain she strives,—involved, ingulf'd in sin,
" She looks for hell, and seems already in:
" When in this travail, the New Birth comes on,
" And in an instant every pang is gone;
" The mighty work is done without our pains,—
" Claim but a part, and not a part remains. (1)
" All this experience tells the Soul, and yet
" These moral men their pence and farthings set
" Against the terrors of the countless Debt:
" But such compounders, when they come to jail,
" Will find that Virtues never serve as bail.
" So much to Duties: now to Learning look,
" And see their priesthood piling book on book;
" Yea, books of infidels, we're told, and plays,
" Put out by heathens in the wink'd-on days;

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pleased to convert Saul while he was persecuting, so he might manifest himself to him while making a moderate use of the good creature tobacco."— BELKNAP's *New Hampshire.*]

(1) [The following is from Huntington's account of his own conversion:—" I was standing on a ladder, in the act of pruning a tree, in a miserable state of melancholy. Suddenly, a great light shone around me; quick as lightning, and far exceeding the sun in brightness. My hair stood upright, and my blood rankled in my veins; and presently a voice from heaven said to me, in plain words, ' Lay by your forms of prayer, and go pray to Jesus Christ: do not you see how pitifully he speaks to sinners?' These were the words verbatim. I immediately retired into the tool-house, pulled off my blue apron, covered my face with it, and prayed precisely thus: ' O Lord, I am a sinner,' &c. That moment the spirit of grace and supplication was poured into my soul, and I forthwith spake as the spirit gave me utterance. I fell on my face, but the vision was still present; and when I arose, all my sins had spread their wings and taken flight."]

" The very letters are of crooked kind,
" And show the strange perverseness of their mind.
" Have I this Learning? When the Lord would speak,
" Think ye he needs the Latin or the Greek?
" And lo! with all their learning, when they rise
" To preach, in view the ready sermon lies;
" Some low-prized stuff they purchased at the stalls,
" And more like Seneca's than mine or Paul's:
" Children of Bondage, how should they explain
" The Spirit's freedom, while they wear a chain?
" They study words, for meanings grow perplex'd,
" And slowly hunt for truth from text to text,
" Through Greek and Hebrew:—we the meaning seek
" Of that within, who every tongue can speak:
" This all can witness; yet the more I know,
" The more a meek and humble mind I show.
" No; let the Pope, the high and mighty priest,
" Lord to the poor, and servant to the Beast;
" Let bishops, deans, and prebendaries swell
" With pride and fatness till their hearts rebel:
" I'm meek and modest:—if I could be proud,
" This crowded meeting, lo! th' amazing crowd!
" Your mute attention, and your meek respect,
" My spirit's fervour, and my words' effect,
" Might stir th' unguarded soul; and oft to me
" The Tempter speaks, whom I compel to flee;
" He goes in fear, for he my force has tried,—
" Such is my power! but can you call it pride?
" No, Fellow-Pilgrims! of the things I've shown
" I might be proud, were they indeed my own!

" But they are lent; and well you know the source
" Of all that's mine, and must confide of course;
" Mine! no, I err; 'tis but consign'd to me,
" And I am nought but steward and trustee."

FAR other Doctrines yon Arminian speaks;
" Seek Grace," he cries, "'for he shall find who seeks."
This is the ancient stock by Wesley led;
They the pure body, he the reverend head:
All innovation they with dread decline,
Their John the elder, was the John divine.
Hence, still their moving prayer, the melting hymn,
The varied accent, and the active limb;
Hence that implicit faith in Satan's might,
And their own matchless prowess in the fight.
In every act they see that lurking foe,
Let loose awhile, about the world to go;
A dragon flying round the earth, to kill
The heavenly hope, and prompt the carnal will; (1)
Whom sainted knights attack in sinners' cause,
And force the wounded victim from his paws;

(1) ["We cannot doubt," says Wesley, "but the moment unholy spirits leave the body, they find themselves surrounded by spirits of their own kind, probably human as well as diabolical. It is not impossible God may suffer Satan to employ them in inflicting evils of various kinds on the men that know not God. For this end, they may raise storms by sea or land; they may shoot meteors through the air; they may occasion earthquakes; and in numberless ways afflict those whom they are not suffered to destroy. May they not be employed in tempting wicked — yea, good men to sin?"]

Who but for them would man's whole race subdue,
For not a hireling will the foe pursue.
" Show me one Churchman who will rise and pray
" Through half the night, though lab'ring all the day,
" Always abounding—show me him, I say:"—
Thus cries the Preacher, and he adds, "Their sheep
" Satan devours at leisure as they sleep.
" Not so with us; we drive him from the fold,
" For ever barking and for ever bold:
" While they securely slumber, all his schemes
" Take full effect, — the Devil never dreams:
" Watchful and changeful through the world he goes,
" And few can trace this deadliest of their foes;
" But I detect, and at his work surprise
" The subtle Serpent under all disguise.
" Thus to Man's soul the Foe of Souls will speak,
"—'A Saint elect, you can have nought to seek;
" 'Why all this labour in so plain a case,
" 'Such care to run, when certain of the race?'
" All this he urges to the carnal will,
" He knows you're slothful, and would have you still:
" Be this your answer, — 'Satan, I will keep
" 'Still on the watch till you are laid asleep.'
" Thus too the Christian's progress he'll retard:—
" 'The gates of mercy are for ever barr'd;
" 'And that with bolts so driven and so stout,
" 'Ten thousand workmen cannot wrench them out.
" To this deceit you have but one reply, —
" Give to the Father of all Lies, the lie.
" A Sister's weakness he'll by fits surprise,
" His her wild laughter, his her piteous cries;

" And should a pastor at her side attend,
" He'll use her organs to abuse her friend:
" These are possessions — unbelieving wits
" Impute them all to Nature: 'They're her fits,
" 'Caused by commotions in the nerves and brains;'—
" Vain talk! but they'll be fitted for their pains.
" These are in part the ills the Foe has wrought,
" And these the Churchman thinks not worth his thought;
" They bid the troubled try for peace and rest,
" Compose their minds, and be no more distress'd;
" As well might they command the passive shore
" To keep secure, and be o'erflow'd no more;
" To the wrong subject is their skill applied,—
" To act like workmen, they should stem the tide.
" These are the Church-Physicians: they are paid
" With noble fees for their advice and aid;
" Yet know they not the inward pulse to feel,
" To ease the anguish, or the wound to heal.
" With the sick Sinner, thus their work begins:
" 'Do you repent you of your former sins?
" 'Will you amend if you revive and live?
" 'And, pardon seeking, will you pardon give?
" 'Have you belief in what your Lord has done,
" 'And are you thankful?—all is well, my son.'
" A way far different ours — we thus surprise
" A soul with questions, and demand replies:
" 'How dropp'd you first,' I ask, 'the legal Yoke?
" 'What the first word the living Witness spoke?
" 'Perceived you thunders roar and lightnings shine,
" 'And tempests gathering ere the Birth divine?

" ' Did fire, and storm, and earthquake all appear
" ' Before that still small voice, *What dost thou here?*
" ' Hast thou by day and night, and soon and late,
" ' Waited and watch'd before Admission-gate;
" ' And so a pilgrim and a soldier pass'd
" ' To Sion's hill through battle and through blast?
" ' Then in thy way didst thou thy foe attack,
" ' And mad'st thou proud Apollyon turn his back?'
" Heart-searching things are these, and shake the mind,
" Yea, like the rustling of a mighty wind.
" Thus would I ask:—' Nay, let me question now,
" ' How sink my sayings in your bosoms? how?
" ' Feel you a quickening? drops the subject deep?
" ' Stupid and stony, no! you're all asleep;
" ' Listless and lazy, waiting for a close,
" ' As if at church;—do I allow repose?
" ' Am I a legal minister? do I
" ' With form or rubrick, rule or rite comply?
" ' Then whence this quiet, tell me, I beseech?
" ' One might believe you heard your Rector preach,
" ' Or his assistant dreamer:—Oh! return,
" ' Ye times of burning, when the heart would burn;
" ' Now hearts are ice, and you, my freezing fold,
" ' Have spirits sunk and sad, and bosoms stony-cold.'
" Oh! now again for those prevailing powers,
" Which once began this mighty work of ours;
" When the wide field, God's Temple, was the place,
" And birds flew by to catch a breath of grace;
" When 'mid his timid friends and threat'ning foes,
" Our zealous chief as Paul at Athens rose:

" When with infernal spite and knotty clubs
" The Ill-One arm'd his scoundrels and his scrubs;
" And there were flying all around the spot [not;(1)
" Brands at the Preacher, but they touch'd him
" Stakes brought to smite him, threaten'd in his cause,
" And tongues, attuned to curses, roar'd applause;
" Louder and louder grew his awful tones,
" Sobbing and sighs were heard, and rueful groans;
" Soft women fainted, prouder man express'd
" Wonder and wo, and butchers smote the breast;
" Eyes wept, ears tingled; stiff'ning on each head,
" The hair drew back, and Satan howl'd and fled. (2)
" In that soft season when the gentle breeze
" Rises all round, and swells by slow degrees;
" Till tempests gather, when through all the sky
" The thunders rattle, and the lightnings fly;

(1) ["Believing himself," says Mr. Southey, "to be an extraordinary person, and engaged in an enterprise of the most important character, he lent a ready faith to whatever marvels had a tendency to designate him as the favourite of God, or the peculiar object of Satan's fury. If any among his hearers pretended to visions, or to be the victim of diabolical possession, he never seems to have thought it necessary to examine into the truth of the ecstasies, but to have taken all for granted. If his horses fell lame, it was the malice of 'the old Murderer,' which had power over them. If his progress was cheered by a favourable change of weather, he immediately recognised the peculiar finger of Providence encouraging him to persevere in his labours."]

(2) [Wesley was not only an enthusiast himself, but the cause of still greater enthusiasm in others, and had the unhappy art of inoculating his audience with convulsions and frenzy, surpassing the most extraordinary symptoms to which animal magnetism has given rise. Violent outcries, howling, gnashing of teeth, frightful convulsions, frenzy, epileptic and apoplectic symptoms, were excited, in turn, on different individuals. Cries were heard as of people being put to the sword; and the ravings of despair, which seemed to arise from an actual foretaste of torment, were strangely blended with rapturous shouts of 'Glory! glory!'—SOUTHEY]

" When rain in torrents wood and vale deform,
" And all is horror, hurricane, and storm :
" So, when the Preacher in that glorious time,
" Than clouds more melting, more than storm sublime,
" Dropp'd the new Word, there came a charm around;
" Tremors and terrors rose upon the sound ;
" The stubborn spirits by his force he broke,
" As the fork'd lightning rives the knotted oak :
" Fear, hope, dismay, all signs of shame or grace,
" Chain'd every foot, or featured every face ;
" Then took his sacred trump a louder swell,
" And now they groan'd, they sicken'd, and they fell;
" Again he sounded, and we heard the cry
" Of the Word-wounded, as about to die ;
" Further and further spread the conquering word,
" As loud he cried—'the Battle of the Lord.'
" Ev'n those apart who were the sound denied,
" Fell down instinctive, and in spirit died.
" Nor stay'd he yet—his eye, his frown, his speech,
" His very gesture had a power to teach ;
" With outstretch'd arms, strong voice, and piercing call,
" He won the field, and made the Dagons fall ;
" And thus in triumph took his glorious way,
" Through scenes of horror, terror, and dismay."(1)

(1) [See the Life of Wesley by Southey, or John Wesley's own Journals, *passim*. The reader will also find many curious details of the extravagance of methodistical fanaticism, in its first period, in the autobiography of the late excellent and learned Dr. Adam Clarke.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER V.

ELECTIONS.

Say then which class to greater folly stoop,
The great in promise, or the poor in hope?

Be brave, for your leader is brave, and vows reformation; there shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny; and the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops. I will make it felony to drink small beer; all shall eat and drink on my score, and I will apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree like brothers; and they shall all worship me as their lord. — SHAKSPEARE'S *Henry VI.*

The Evils of the Contest, and how in part to be avoided — The Miseries endured by a Friend of the Candidate — The various Liberties taken with him, who has no personal Interest in the Success — The unreasonable Expectations of Voters — The Censures of the opposing Party — The Vices as well as Follies shown in such Time of Contest — Plans and Cunning of Electors — Evils which remain after the Decision, opposed in vain by the Efforts of the Friendly, and of the Successful; among whom is the Mayor — Story of his Advancement till he was raised to the Government of the Borough — These Evils not to be placed in Balance with the Liberty of the People, but are yet Subjects of just Complaint.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER V.

THE ELECTION.

YES, our Election's past, and we've been free,
Somewhat as madmen without keepers be;
And such desire of Freedom has been shown,
That both the parties wish'd her all their own:
All our free smiths and cobblers in the town
Were loth to lay such pleasant freedom down;
To put the bludgeon and cockade aside,
And let us pass unhurt and undefied.
True! you might then your party's sign produce,
And so escape with only half th' abuse;
With half the danger as you walk'd along,
With rage and threat'ning but from half the throng
This you might do, and not your fortune mend,
For where you lost a foe, you gain'd a friend;
And to distress you, vex you, and expose,
Election-friends are worse than any foes;
The party-curse is with the canvass past,
But party-friendship, for your grief, will last.

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Friends of all kinds; the civil and the rude,
Who humbly wish, or boldly dare t' intrude;
These beg or take a liberty to come
(Friends should be free), and make your house their home;
They know that warmly you their cause espouse,
And come to make their boastings and their bows:
You scorn their manners, you their words mistrust,
But you must hear them, and they know you must.

One plainly sees a friendship firm and true,
Between the noble candidate and you;
So humbly begs (and states at large the case),
"You 'll think of Bobby and the little place."

Stifling his shame by drink, a wretch will come,
And prate your wife and daughter from the room:
In pain you hear him, and at heart despise,
Yet with heroic mind your pangs disguise;
And still in patience to the sot attend,
To show what man can bear to serve a friend.

One enters hungry—not to be denied,
And takes his place and jokes—"We're of a side."
Yet worse, the proser who, upon the strength
Of his one vote, has tales of three hours' length;
This sorry rogue you bear, yet with surprise
Start at his oaths, and sicken at his lies.

Then comes there one, and tells in friendly way
What the opponents in their anger say;
All that through life has vex'd you, all abuse,
Will this kind friend in pure regard produce;
And having through your own offences run,
Adds (as appendage) what your friends have done.

Has any female cousin made a trip
To Gretna Green, or more vexatious slip?
Has your wife's brother, or your uncle's son,
Done aught amiss, or is he thought t' have done?
Is there of all your kindred some who lack
Vision direct, or have a gibbous back?
From your unlucky name may quips and puns
Be made by these upbraiding Goths and Huns?
To some great public character have you
Assign'd the fame to worth and talents due,
Proud of your praise?—In this, in any case,
Where the brute-spirit may affix disgrace,
These friends will smiling bring it, and the while
You silent sit, and practise for a smile.

Vain of their power, and of their value sure,
They nearly guess the tortures you endure;
Nor spare one pang—for they perceive your heart
Goes with the cause; you 'd die before you 'd start;
Do what they may, they 're sure you 'll not offend
Men who have pledged their honours to your friend.

Those friends indeed, who start as in a race,
May love the sport, and laugh at this disgrace;
They have in view the glory and the prize,
Nor heed the dirty steps by which they rise:
But we their poor associates lose the fame,
Though more than partners in the toil and shame.

Were this the whole; and did the time produce
But shame and toil, but riot and abuse;
We might be then from serious griefs exempt,
And view the whole with pity and contempt.
Alas! but here the vilest passions rule;
It is Seduction's, is Temptation's school;

Where vices mingle in the oddest ways,
The grossest slander and the dirtiest praise;
Flattery enough to make the vainest sick,
And clumsy stratagem, and scoundrel trick:
Nay more, your anger and contempt to cause,
These, while they fish for profit, claim applause;
Bribed, bought, and bound, they banish shame and fear;
Tell you they're staunch, and have a soul sincere;
Then talk of honour, and, if doubt's express'd,
Show where it lies, and smite upon the breast.
Among these worthies, some at first declare
For whom they vote: he then has most to spare;
Others hang off — when coming to the post
Is spurring time, and then he'll spare the most:
While some demurring, wait, and find at last
The bidding languish, and the market past;
These will affect all bribery to condemn,
And be it Satan laughs, he laughs at them.
'Some too are pious — One desired the Lord
To teach him where "to drop his little word;
"To lend his vote, where it will profit best;
"Promotion came not from the east or west;
"But as their freedom had promoted some, come.
"He should be glad to know which way 't would
"It was a naughty world, and where to sell
"His precious charge, was more than he could tell."
"But you succeeded?" — True, at mighty cost,
And our good friend, I fear, will think he's lost:
Inns, horses, chaises, dinners, balls, and notes;
What fill'd their purses, and what drench'd their throats;

The private pension, and indulgent lease,—
Have all been granted to these friends who fleece;
Friends who will hang like burs upon his coat,
And boundless judge the value of a vote.

And though the terrors of the time be pass'd,
There still remain the scatterings of the blast;
The boughs are parted that entwined before,
And ancient harmony exists no more;
The gusts of wrath our peaceful seats deform,
And sadly flows the sighing of the storm:
Those who have gain'd are sorry for the gloom,
But they who lost, unwilling peace should come;
There open envy, here suppress'd delight,
Yet live till time shall better thoughts excite,
And so prepare us, by a six-years' truce,
Again for riot, insult, and abuse.

Our worthy Mayor, on the victorious part,
Cries out for peace, and cries with all his heart;
He, civil creature! ever does his best,
To banish wrath from every voter's breast;
"For where," says he, with reason strong and plain,
"Where is the profit? what will anger gain?"
His short stout person he is wont to brace
In good brown broad-cloth, edged with two-inch lace,
When in his seat; and still the coat seems new,
Preserved by common use of seaman's blue.

He was a Fisher from his earliest day,
And placed his nets within the Borough's bay;
Where, by his skates, his herrings, and his soles,
He lived, nor dream'd of Corporation-Doles; (1)

(1) I am informed that some explanation is here necessary, though I am ignorant for what class of readers it can be required. Some corporate

But toiling saved, and saving, never ceased
Till he had box'd up twelvescore pounds at least:
He knew not money's power, but judged it best
Safe in his trunk to let his treasure rest;
Yet to a friend complain'd: "Sad charge, to keep
"So many pounds, and then I cannot sleep:"
"Then put it out," replied the friend:—"What, give
"My money up? why then I could not live:"
"Nay, but for interest place it in his hands,
"Who 'll give you mortgage on his house or lands.'
"Oh but," said Daniel, "that 's a dangerous plan,
"He may be robb'd like any other man:"
"Still he is bound, and you may be at rest,
"More safe the money than within your chest;
"And you 'll receive, from all deductions clear,
"Five pounds for every hundred, every year."
"What good in that?" quoth Daniel, "for 'tis plain,
"If part I take, there can but part remain:"
"What! you, my friend, so skill'd in gainful things,
"Have you to learn what Interest money brings?"
"Not so," said Daniel, "perfectly I know,
"He 's the most interest who has most to show."
"True! and he 'll show the more, the more he lends;
"Thus he his weight and consequence extends;
"For they who borrow must restore each sum,
"And pay for use. What, Daniel, art thou dumb?"

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bodies have actual property, as appears by their receiving rents; and they obtain money on the admission of members into their society: this they may lawfully share, perhaps. There are, moreover, other doles, of still greater value, of which it is not necessary for me to explain the nature or to enquire into the legality.

For much amazed was that good man.—"Indeed!
Said he with glad'ning eye, "will money breed? (1)
"How have I lived? I grieve, with all my heart,
"For my late knowledge in this precious art:—
"Five pounds for every hundred will he give?
"And then the hundred?—I begin to live."—
So he began, and other means he found,
As he went on, to multiply a pound:
Though blind so long to Interest, all allow
That no man better understands it now;
Him in our Body-Corporate we chose,
And once among us, he above us rose;
Stepping from post to post, he reach'd the Chair,
And there he now reposes—that's the Mayor. (2)
But 't is not he, 't is not the kinder few,
The mild, the good, who can our peace renew;
A peevish humour swells in every eye,
The warm are angry, and the cool are shy;
There is no more the social board at whist,
The good old partners are with scorn dismiss'd;

(1) [Original edition:—

In fact, the Fisher was amazed: as soon
Could he have judged gold issued from the moon;
But being taught, he grieved with all his heart
For lack of knowledge in this precious art.]

(2) The circumstance here related is a fact; although it may appear to many almost incredible, that, in this country, and but few years since, a close and successful man should be a stranger to the method of increasing money by the loan of it. The minister of the place where the honest Fisherman resided has related to me the apprehension and suspicion he witnessed: with trembling hand and dubious look, the careful man received and surveyed the bond given to him; and, after a sigh or two of lingering mistrust, he placed it in the coffer whence he had just before taken his cash; for which, and for whose increase, he now indulged a belief that it was indeed both promise and security.

No more with dog and lantern comes the maid,
To guide the mistress when the rubber's play'd;
Sad shifts are made lest ribands blue and green
Should at one table, at one time, be seen:
On care and merit none will now rely,
'T is Party sells, what party-friends must buy;
The warmest burgess wears a bodger's coat,
And fashion gains less int'rest than a vote;
Uncheck'd the vintner still his poison vends,
For he too votes, and can command his friends.
But this admitted; be it still agreed,
These ill effects from noble cause proceed;
Though like some vile excrescences they be,
The tree they spring from is a sacred tree,
And its true produce, Strength and Liberty.
Yet if we could th' attendant ills suppress,
If we could make the sum of mischief less;
If we could warm and angry men persuade
No more man's common comforts to invade;
And that old ease and harmony re-seat
In all our meetings, so in joy to meet;
Much would of glory to the Muse ensue,
And our good Vicar would have less to do.

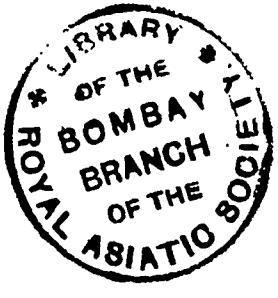
THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VI.

PROFESSIONS — LAW.

Quid leges sine moribus
Vanæ proficiunt? — HORACE.

Væ! misero mihi, mea nunc facinora
Aperiuntur, clam quæ speravi fore. — MANILIUS.



Trades and Professions of every Kind to be found in the Borough — Its Seamen and Soldiers — Law, the Danger of the Subject — Coddrington's Offence — Attorneys increased; their splendid Appearance, how supported — Some worthy Exceptions — Spirit of Litigation, how stirred up — A Boy articled as a Clerk; his Ideas — How this Profession perverts the Judgment — Actions appear through this Medium in a false Light — Success from honest Application — Archer, a worthy Character — Swallow, a Character of different Kind — His Origin, Progress, Success, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VI.

PROFESSIONS—LAW.

" TRADES and Professions"—these are themes the Muse,
Left to her freedom, would forbear to choose;
But to our Borough they in truth belong,
And we, perforce, must take them in our song.
Be it then known that we can boast of these
In all denominations, ranks, degrees;
All who our numerous wants through life supply,
Who soothe us sick, attend us when we die,
Or for the dead their various talents try.
Then have we those who live by secret arts,
By hunting fortunes, and by stealing hearts;
Or who by nobler means themselves advance,
Or who subsist by charity and chance.
Say, of our native heroes shall I boast,
Born in our streets, to thunder on our coast,
Our Borough-seamen? Could the timid Muse
More patriot-ardour in their breasts infuse;

Or could she paint their merit or their skill,
She wants not love, alacrity, or will:
But needless all; that ardour is their own,
And for their deeds, themselves have made them known.
Soldiers in arms! Defenders of our soil!
Who from destruction save us; who from spoil
Protect the sons of peace, who traffic, or who toil;
Would I could duly praise you; that each deed
Your foes might honour, and your friends might read:
This too is needless; you've imprinted well
Your powers, and told what I should feebly tell:
Beside, a Muse like mine, to satire prone,
Would fail in themes where there is praise alone.
—Law shall I sing, or what to Law belongs?
Alas! there may be danger in such songs;
A foolish rhyme, 'tis said, a trifling thing,
The law found treason, for it touch'd the King. (1)
But kings have mercy, in these happy times,
Or surely *One* (2) had suffer'd for his rhymes;
Our glorious Edwards and our Henrys bold,
So touch'd, had kept the reprobate in hold;
But he escaped,—nor fear, thank Heav'n, have I,
Who love my king, for such offence to die.
But I am taught the danger would be much,
If these poor lines should one *attorney* touch—

(1) ["It stands on record, that in Richard's times
A man was hang'd for very honest rhymes."—POPE.]

(2) [The poet no doubt alludes to Dr. Wolcot, who, under the well-known appellation of Peter Pindar, published various satires calculated to bring the person and character of George the Third into contempt and hatred. He died in 1819.]

(One of those *Limbs* of Law who're always here;
The *Heads* come down to guide them twice a year).
I might not swing, indeed, but he in sport
Would whip a rhymer on from court to court;
Stop him in each, and make him pay for all
The long proceedings in that dreaded Hall:—
Then let my numbers flow discreetly on,
Warn'd by the fate of luckless Coddrington, (1)
Lest some *attorney* (pardon me the name)
Should wound a poor *solicitor* for fame.

One Man of Law in George the Second's reign
Was all our frugal fathers would maintain;

(1) The account of Coddrington occurs in "The Mirrour for Magistrates." He suffered in the reign of Richard III. [The execution of *Collingbourne* was under colour of rebellion, but in reality on account of the doggerel couplet which he is introduced as quoting in "The Mirrour:"

"They murder'd mee, for metring things amisse;
For wotst thou what? I am that Collingbourne,
Which made the ryme, whereof I well may mourne—
'*The Cat, the Rat, and Lovell our Dog,*
'*Do rule all England, under a Hog!*'
Whereof the meaning was so playne and true,
That every fool perceived it at furst:
Most liked it; for most that most things knew
In hugger-mugger, mutter'd what they durst;
The tyraunt Prince of most was held accurst,
Both for his own and for his counsayl's faults,
Of whom were three, the naughtiest of the naughts.
Catesby was one, whom I called a Cat;
A crafty lawyer, catching all hee could.
The second Ratcliffe, whom I named a Rat,
A cruel beast to gnawe on whom hee should:
Lord Lovell barkt and bit whom Richard would,
Whom I therefore did rightly terme our Dog;
Wherewith to ryme I calde the King a Hog."

—Such are the verses headed "How Collingbourne was cruelly executed for a foolish rhyme." The *hog* of the original rhyme is, however, an allusion to the well-known *Silver Boar* of Richard's cognizance: whence also Gray's lines:—

"The bristled boar in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade," &c. &c.]

He too was kept for forms; a man of peace,
To frame a contract, or to draw a lease:
He had a clerk, with whom he used to write
All the day long, with whom he drank at night;
Spare was his visage, moderate his bill,
And he so kind, men doubted of his skill.

Who thinks of this, with some amazement sees,
For one so poor, three flourishing at ease;
Nay, one in splendour!—see that mansion tall,
That lofty door, the far-resounding hall;
Well-furnish'd rooms, plate shining on the board,
Gay liveried lads, and cellar proudly stored:
Then say how comes it that such fortunes crown
These sons of strife, these terrors of the town?

Lo! that small Office! there th' incautious guest
Goes blindfold in, and that maintains the rest;
There in his web, th' observant spider lies,
And peers about for fat intruding flies;
Doubtful at first, he hears the distant hum,
And feels them flutt'ring as they nearer come;
They buzz and blink, and doubtfully they tread
On the strong bird-lime of the utmost thread;
But when they're once entangled by the gin,
With what an eager clasp he draws them in;
Nor shall they 'scape, till after long delay,
And all that sweetens life is drawn away. (1)

"Nay, this," you cry, "is common-place, the tale
"Of petty tradesmen o'er their evening ale;

(1) ["He that with injury is grieved
And goes to law to be relieved,
Is sillier than a scottish chouse
Who, when a thief has robb'd his house,

" There are who, living by the legal pen,
" Are held in honour,—' honourable men.'"
Doubtless—there are who hold manorial courts,
Or whom the trust of powerful friends supports;
Or who, by labouring through a length of time,
Have pick'd their way, unsullied by a crime.
These are the few—In this, in every place,
Fix the litigious rupture-stirring race;
Who to contention as to trade are led,
To whom dispute and strife are bliss and bread.
There is a doubtful Pauper, and we think
'Tis not with us to give him meat and drink;
There is a Child; and 'tis not mighty clear
Whether the mother lived with us a year:
A Road's indicted, and our seniors doubt
If in our proper boundary or without:
But what says our Attorney? He, our friend,
Tells us 'tis just and manly to contend.
" What! to a neighbouring parish yield your cause,
" While you have money, and the nation laws?
" What! lose without a trial, that which, tried,
" May—nay it must—be given on our side?
" All men of spirit would contend; such men
" Than lose a pound would rather hazard ten.
" What! be imposed on? No! a British soul
" Despises imposition, hates control;

Applies himself to cunning men,
To help him to his goods again.
Others believe no voice t' an organ
So sweet as lawyer's in his bar gown,
Until with subtle cobweb-cheats
They 're catched in knotted law, like nets;
In which, when once they are imbrangled,
The more they stir, the more they 're tangled." — BUTLER.]

" The law is open; let them, if they dare,
" Support their cause; the Borough need not spare:
" All I advise is vigour and good-will:
" Is it agreed then?—Shall I file a bill?"

The trader, grazier, merchant, priest, and all,
Whose sons aspiring, to Professions call,
Choose from their lads some bold and subtle boy,
And judge him fitted for this grave employ:
Him a keen old practitioner admits,
To write five years and exercise his wits:
The youth has heard—it is in fact his creed—
Mankind dispute, that Lawyers may be fee'd:
Jails, bailiffs, writs, all terms and threats of law,
Grow now familiar as once top and taw;
Rage, hatred, fear, the mind's severer ills,
All bring employment, all augment his bills:
As feels the surgeon for the mangled limb,
The mangled mind is but a job for him;
Thus taught to think, these legal reasoners draw
Morals and maxims from their views of Law;
They cease to judge by precepts taught in schools,
By man's plain sense, or by religious rules;
No! nor by law itself, in truth discern'd,
But as its statutes may be warp'd and turn'd:
How they should judge of man; his word and deed,
They in their books and not their bosoms read:
Of some good act you speak with just applause,
" No, no!" says he, "'twould be a losing cause."
Blame you some tyrant's deed?—he answers, " Nay,
" He'll get a verdict; heed you what you say."
Thus to conclusions from examples led,
The heart resigns all judgment to the head;

Law, law alone for ever kept in view,
His measures guides, and rules his conscience too;
Of ten commandments, he confesses three
Are yet in force, and tells you which they be,
As Law instructs him, thus: "Your neighbour's wife
"You must not take, his chattels, nor his life;
"Break these decrees, for damage you must pay;
"These you must reverence, and the rest — you may." (1)
Law was design'd to keep a state in peace;
To punish robbery, that wrong might cease;

(1) ["When money will hire you to plead for injustice against your own knowledge, and to use your wits to defraud the righteous and spoil his cause, or vex him with delays, for the advantage of your unrighteous client, — I would not have your conscience for all your gains, nor your accompt to make for all the world." — BAXTER.

——— "I asked him whether, as a moralist, he did not think that the practice of the law, in some degree, hurt the nice feeling of honesty? JOHNSON: 'Why, no, sir, if you act properly.' BOSWELL: 'But what do you think of supporting a cause which you know to be bad?' JOHNSON: 'Sir, you do not know it to be good or bad till the judge determines it. I have said that you are to state facts fairly; so that your thinking, or what you call knowing, a cause to be bad, must be from reasoning — must be from your supposing your arguments to be weak and inconclusive. But sir, that is not enough. An argument which does not convince yourself, may convince the judge to whom you urge it; and if it does convince him, why then, sir, you are wrong and he is right. It is his business to judge; and you are not to be confident in your own opinion that a cause is bad, but to say all you can for your client, and then hear the judge's opinion.' BOSWELL: 'But, sir, does not affecting a warmth when you have no warmth, and appearing to be clearly of one opinion when you are in reality of another, does not such dissimulation impair one's honesty? Is there not some danger that a lawyer may put on the same mask in common life, in the intercourse with his friends?' JOHNSON: 'Why, no, sir. Every body knows you are paid for affecting warmth for your client; and it is, therefore, no dissimulation; the moment you come from the bar you resume your usual behaviour. Sir, a man will no more carry the artifice of the bar into the common intercourse of society, than a man who is paid for tumbling upon his hands will continue to tumble upon his hands when he should walk on his feet.'" — *Croker's Boswell*, vol. ii. p. 48.]

To be impregnable; a constant fort,
To which the weak and injured might resort·
But these perverted minds its force employ,
Not to protect mankind, but to annoy;
And long as ammunition can be found,
Its lightning flashes and its thunders sound.
Or law with lawyers is an ample still,
Wrought by the passions' heat with chymic skill;
While the fire burns, the gains are quickly made,
And freely flow the profits of the trade;
Nay, when the fierceness fails, these artists blow
The dying fire, and make the embers glow,
As long as they can make the smaller profits flow;
At length the process of itself will stop,
When they perceive they've drawn out every drop. (1)
Yet, I repeat, there are, who nobly strive
To keep the sense of moral worth alive;
Men who would starve, ere meanly deign to live
On what deception and chican'ry give;
And these at length succeed; they have their strife,
Their apprehensions, stops, and rubs in life;
But honour, application, care, and skill,
Shall bend opposing fortune to their will.

(1) ["Not one of all the trade that I know
E'er fails to take the ready rhino,
Which haply if his purse receive,
No human art can e'er retrieve;
Sooner the daring wights who go
Down to the watery world below,
Shall force old Neptune to disgorge
And vomit up the Royal George,
Than he who hath his bargain made,
And legally his cash convey'd,
Shall e'er his pocket reimburse
By diving in a lawyer's purse."— ANSTEY.]

Of such is *Archer*, he who keeps in awe
Contending parties by his threats of law:
He, roughly honest, has been long a guide
In Borough-business, on the conquering side;
And seen so much of both sides, and so long,
He thinks the bias of man's mind goes wrong:
Thus, though he's friendly, he is still severe,
Surly though kind, suspiciously sincere:
So much he's seen of baseness in the mind,
That, while a friend to man, he scorns mankind;
He knows the human heart, and sees with dread,
By slight temptation, how the strong are led;
He knows how interest can asunder rend
The bond of parent, master, guardian, friend,
To form a new and a degrading tie
'Twixt needy vice and tempting villany.
Sound in himself, yet when such flaws appear,
He doubts of all, and learns that self to fear:
For where so dark the moral view is grown,
A timid conscience trembles for her own;
The pitchy-taint of general vice is such
As daubs the fancy, and you dread the touch.

Far unlike him was one in former times,
Famed for the spoil he gather'd by his crimes;
Who, while his brethren nibbling held their prey,
He like an eagle seized and bore the whole away.

Swallow, a poor Attorney, brought his boy
Up at his desk, and gave him his employ;
He would have bound him to an honest trade,
Could preparations have been duly made.
The clerkship ended, both the sire and son
Together did what business could be done;

Sometimes they'd luck to stir up small disputes
Among their friends, and raise them into suits:
Though close and hard, the father was content
With this resource, now old and indolent:
But his young Swallow, gaping and alive
To fiercer feelings, was resolved to thrive:—
"Father," he said, "but little can they win,
"Who hunt in couples where the game is thin;
"Let's part in peace, and each pursue his gain,
"Where it may start — our love may yet remain.
The parent growl'd, he couldn't think that love
Made the young cockatrice his den remove;
But, taught by habit, he the truth suppress'd,
Forced a frank look, and said he "thought it best."
Not long they'd parted ere dispute arose;
The game they hunted quickly made them foes:
Some house, the father by his art had won,
Seem'd a fit cause of contest to the son,
Who raised a claimant, and then found a way
By a staunch witness to secure his prey.
The people cursed him, but in times of need
Trusted in one so certain to succeed:
By Law's dark by-ways he had stored his mind
With wicked knowledge, how to cheat mankind.
Few are the freeholds in our ancient town;
A copy-right from heir to heir came down,
From whence some heat arose, when there was doubt
In point of heirship; but the fire went out,
Till our Attorney had the art to raise
The dying spark, and blow it to a blaze:
For this he now began his friends to treat;
His way to starve them was to make them eat.

And drink oblivious draughts — to his applause,
It must be said, he never starved a cause;
He'd roast and boil'd upon his board; the boast
Of half his victims was his boil'd and roast;
And these at every hour: — he seldom took
Aside his client, till he'd praised his cook;
Nor to an office led him, there in pain
To give his story and go out again;
But first, the brandy and the chine were seen,
And then the business came by starts between.
" Well, if 't is so, the house to you belongs;
" But have you money to redress these wrongs?
" Nay, look not sad, my friend; if you 're correct,
" You'll find the friendship that you'd not expect."
If right the man, the house was Swallow's own;
If wrong, his kindness and good will were shown:
" Rogue!" " Villain!" " Scoundrel!" cried the losers all:
He let them cry, for what would that recall?
At length he left us, took a village seat,
And like a vulture look'd abroad for meat;
The Borough-booty, give it all its praise,
Had only served the appetite to raise;
But if from simple heirs he drew their land,
He might a noble feast at will command;
Still he proceeded by his former rules,
His bait, their pleasures, when he fish'd for fools —
Flagons and haunches on his board were placed,
And subtle avarice look'd like thoughtless waste:
Most of his friends, though youth from him had fled,
Were young, were minors, of their sires in dread;
Or those whom widow'd mothers kept in bounds,
And check'd their generous rage for steeds and hounds;

Or such as travell'd 'cross the land to view
A Christian's conflict with a boxing Jew: (1)
Some too had run upon Newmarket heath
With so much speed that they were out of breath;
Others had tasted claret, till they now
To humbler port would turn, and knew not how.
All these for favours would to Swallow run,
Who never sought their thanks for all he'd done
He kindly took them by the hand, then bow'd
Politely low, and thus his love avow'd —
(For he'd a way that many judged polite,
A cunning dog—he 'd fawn before he'd bite) —
" Observe, my friends, the frailty of our race
" When age unmans us—let me state a case:
" There's our friend Rupert—we shall soon redress
" His present evil—drink to our success —
" I flatter not; but did you ever see
" Limbs better turn'd? a prettier boy than he?
" His senses all acute, his passions such
" As nature gave — she never does too much;
" His the bold wish the cup of joy to drain,
" And strength to bear it without qualm or pain.
" Now view his father as he dozing lies,
" Whose senses wake not when he opes his eyes;
" Who slips and shuffles when he means to walk,
" And lisps and gabbles if he tries to talk;
" Feeling he's none — he could as soon destroy
" The earth itself, as aught it holds enjoy;
" A nurse attends him to lay straight his limbs,
" Present his gruel, and respect his whims:

(1) [The boxing match between Humphreys and the Jew Mendoza took place in 1788, and has already been alluded to, *ante*, Vol. II. p. 144.]

" Now shall this dotard from our hero hold
" His lands and lordships? Shall he hide his gold?
" That which he cannot use, and dare not show,
" And will not give — why longer should he owe?
" Yet, 't would be murder should we snap the locks,
" And take the thing he worships from the box;
" So let him dote and dream: but, till he die,
" Shall not our generous heir receive supply?
" For ever sitting on the river's brink,
" And ever thirsty, shall he fear to drink?
" The means are simple, let him only wish,
" Then say he's willing, and I'll fill his dish."
They all applauded, and not least the boy,
Who now replied, " It fill'd his heart with joy
" To find he needed not deliv'rance crave
" Of death, or wish the Justice in the grave;
" Who, while he spent, would every art retain,
" Of luring home the scatter'd gold again;
" Just as a fountain gaily spirts and plays
" With what returns in still and secret ways."
Short was the dream of bliss; he quickly found,
His father's acres all were Swallow's ground.
Yet to those arts would other heroes lend
A willing ear, and Swallow was their friend;
Ever successful, some began to think
That Satan help'd him to his pen and ink;
And shrewd suspicions ran about the place,
" There was a compact"—I must leave the case.
But of the parties, had the fiend been one,
The business could not have been speedier done:
Still when a man has angled day and night,
The silliest gudgeons will refuse to bite:

So Swallow tried no more; but if they came
To seek his friendship, that remain'd the same:
Thus he retired in peace, and some would say
He'd balk'd his partner, and had learn'd to pray.
To this some zealots lent an ear, and sought
How Swallow felt, then said "a change is wrought."
'T was true there wanted all the signs of grace,
But there were strong professions in their place;
Then, too, the less that men from him expect,
The more the praise to the converting sect;
He had not yet subscribed to all their creed,
Nor own'd a Call, but he confess'd the need:
His acquiescent speech, his gracious look,
That pure attention, when the brethren spoke,
Was all contrition, — he had felt the wound,
And with confession would again be sound.
True, Swallow's board had still the sumptuous treat;
But could they blame? the warmest zealots eat:
He drank — 'twas needful his poor nerves to brace;
He swore — 'twas habit; he was grieved — 'twas grace:
What could they do a new-born zeal to nurse?
"His wealth 's undoubted — let him hold our purse;
"He 'll add his bounty, and the house we 'll raise
"Hard by the church, and gather all her strays:
"We 'll watch her sinners as they home retire,
"And pluck the brands from the devouring fire."
Alas! such speech was but an empty boast;
The good men reckon'd, but without their host;
Swallow, delighted, took the trusted store,
And own'd the sum: they did not ask for more,

Till more was needed; when they call'd for aid —
And had it? — No, their agent was afraid:
"Could he but know to whom he should refund,
"He would most gladly — nay, he'd go beyond;
"But when such numbers claim'd, when some were gone,
"And others going — he must hold it on;
"The Lord would help them"—Loud their anger grew,
And while they threat'ning from his door withdrew,
He bow'd politely low, and bade them all adieu. (1)
But lives the man by whom such deeds are done?
Yes, many such — but Swallow's race is run;
His name is lost, — for though his sons have name,
It is not his, they all escape the shame;
Nor is there vestige now of all he had,
His means are wasted, for his heir was mad:
Still we of Swallow as a monster speak,
A hard bad man, who prey'd upon the weak. (2)

(1) ["The character of Archer, the honest but stern and suspicious attorney, and also that of the cunning and unprincipled Swallow, are admirably drawn; but in the latter Mr. Crabbe takes care to throw in some sarcasms on the zealots, who were too ready to claim him as a convert, and trust him as their treasurer." — *Eclectic Review.*]

(2) I entertain the strongest, because the most reasonable hope, that no liberal practitioner in the Law will be offended by the notice taken of dishonourable and crafty attorneys. The increased difficulty of entering into the profession will in time render it much more free than it now is, from those who disgrace it: at present such persons remain, and it would not be difficult to give instances of neglect, cruelty, oppression, and chicanery; nor are they by any means confined to one part of the country. Quacks and impostors are indeed in every profession, as well with a licence as without one. The character and actions of Swallow might doubtless be contrasted by the delineation of an able and upright solicitor; but this letter is of sufficient length, and such persons, without question, are already known to my readers.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VII.

PROFESSIONS — PHYSIC.

Finirent multi letho mala; credula vitam
Spes alit, et melius cras fore semper ait. — TIBULLUS.

He fell to juggle, cant, and cheat....
For as those fowls that live in water
Are never wet, he did but smatter;
Whate'er he labour'd to appear,
His understanding still was clear.
A paltry wretch he had, half-starved,
That him in place of zany served. — BUTLER's *Hudibras.*

The Worth and Excellence of the true Physician — Merit, not the sole Cause of Success — Modes of advancing Reputation — Motives of medical Men for publishing their Works — The great Evil of Quackery — Present State of advertising Quacks — Their Hazard — Some fail, and why — Causes of Success — How Men of understanding are prevailed upon to have Recourse to Empirics, and to permit their Names to be advertised — Evils of Quackery: to nervous Females: to Youth: to Infants — History of an advertising Empiric, &c.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VII.

PROFESSIONS—PHYSIC.

NEXT, to a graver tribe we turn our view,
And yield the praise to worth and science due;
But this with serious words and sober style,
For these are friends with whom we seldom smile: (1)
Helpers of Men (2) they 're call'd, and we confess
Theirs the deep study, theirs the lucky guess;
We own that numbers join with care and skill,
A temperate judgment, a devoted will;
Men who suppress their feelings, but who feel
The painful symptoms they delight to heal; (3)

(1) [Original edition: —

From Law to Physic, stepping at our ease,
We find a way to finish — by degrees;
Forgive the quibble, and in graver style,
We 'll sing of these with whom we seldom smile.]

(2) Opiferque per orbem dicor.

(3) ["I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession. I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacks in expectation of malignant effects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses; I rejoice not at unwholesome springs, nor

Patient in all their trials, they sustain
The starts of passion, the reproach of pain;
With hearts affected, but with looks serene,
Intent they wait through all the solemn scene;
Glad if a hope should rise from nature's strife,
To aid their skill and save the lingering life;
But this must virtue's generous effort be,
And spring from nobler motives than a fee:
To the Physician of the Soul, and these,
Turn the distress'd for safety, hope, and ease. (1)
But as physicians of that nobler kind
Have their warm zealots, and their sectaries blind;
So among these for knowledge most renown'd,
Are dreamers strange, and stubborn bigots found:

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unseasonable winters; my prayer goes with the husbandman's. I desire every thing in its proper season, that neither man nor the times be out of temper. Let me be sick myself if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease to me. I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities: where I do him no good, methinks it is no honest gain, though I confess it to be the worthy salary of our well-intended endeavours; I am not only ashamed, but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable, yet not for mine own sake, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own." — SIR THOMAS BROWNE.]

(1) [I esteem it the office of a physician not only to restore health, but to mitigate pain and dolours; and not only when such mitigation may conduce to recovery, but when it may serve to make a fair and easy passage; for it is no small felicity which Augustus Cæsar was wont to wish to himself, that same 'euthanasia;' and what was specially noted in the death of Antoninus Pius, whose death was after the fashion and semblance of a kindly and pleasant sleep. So it is written of Epicurus, that, after his disease was judged desperate, he drowned his stomach and senses with a large draught and ingurgitation of wine; whereupon the epigram was made:

'Hinc Stygias ebrius hausit aquas.'

He was not sober enough to taste any bitterness of the Stygian water. But the physicians, contrariwise, do make a kind of simple religion to stay with the patient after the disease is disclosed; whereas, in my judgment, they ought both to enquire the skill, and to give the attendances, for the facilitating and assuaging of the pains and agonies of death. — BACON.]

Some, too, admitted to this honour'd name,
Have, without learning, found a way to fame;
And some by learning—young physicians write,
To set their merit in the fairest light;
With them a treatise is a bait that draws
Approving voices—'t is to gain applause,
And to exalt them in the public view,
More than a life of worthy toil could do.
When 't is proposed to make the man renown'd,
In every age, convenient doubts abound;
Convenient themes in every period start,
Which he may treat with all the pomp of art;
Curious conjectures he may always make,
And either side of dubious questions take:
He may a system broach, or, if he please,
Start new opinions of an old disease;
Or may some simple in the woodland trace,
And be its patron, till it runs its race;
As rustic damsels from their woods are won,
And live in splendour till their race be run;
It weighs not much on what their powers be shown,
When all his purpose is to make them known.
To show the world what long experience gains,
Requires not courage, though it calls for pains;
But at life's outset to inform mankind,
Is a bold effort of a valiant mind. (1)

(1) When I observe, that the young and less experienced physician will write rather with a view of making himself known, than to investigate and publish some useful fact, I would not be thought to extend this remark to all the publications of such men. I could point out a work, containing experiments the most judicious, and conclusions the most interesting, made by a gentleman, then young, which would have given just celebrity to a man after long practice. The observation is nevertheless true: many opinions have been adopted, and many books written, not that the theory

The great good man, for noblest cause displays
What many labours taught, and many days;
These sound instruction from experience give,
The others show us how they mean to live.:
That they have genius, and they hope mankind
Will to its efforts be no longer blind.

There are, beside, whom powerful friends advance,
Whom fashion favours, person, patrons, chance:
And merit sighs to see a fortune made
By daring rashness or by dull parade.

But these are trifling evils; there is one
Which walks uncheck'd, and triumphs in the sun:
There was a time, when we beheld the Quack,
On public stage, the licensed trade attack;
He made his labour'd speech with poor parade;
And then a laughing zany lent him aid:
Smiling we pass'd him, but we felt the while
Pity so much, that soon we ceased to smile;
Assured that fluent speech and flow'ry vest
Disguised the troubles of a man distress'd: —

But now our Quacks are gamesters, and they play
With craft and skill to ruin and betray;
With monstrous promise they delude the mind,
And thrive on all that tortures human-kind.

Void of all honour, avaricious, rash,
The daring tribe compound their boasted trash —

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might be well defended, but that a young physician might be better known.— [The gentleman here alluded to is Dr. Edmund Goodwyn. He was assistant surgeon to Mr. Page of Woodbridge, when the Poet was apprentice there, and published, in 1788, an "Experimental Enquiry into the Effects of Submersion, Strangulation, and several Kinds of noxious Airs on Living Animals."]

Tincture or syrup, lotion, drop or pill;
All tempt the sick to trust the lying bill; (1)
And twenty names of cobblers turn'd to squires,
Aid the bold language of these blushless liars.
There are among them those who cannot read,
And yet they 'll buy a patent, and succeed;
Will dare to promise dying sufferers aid,
For who, when dead, can threaten or upbraid?
With cruel avarice still they recommend
More draughts, more syrup to the journey's end:
"I feel it not;"—"Then take it every hour:"
"It makes me worse;"—"Why then it shows its power:"
"I fear to die;"—"Let not your spirits sink,
"You 're always safe, while you believe and drink."
How strange to add, in this nefarious trade,
That men of parts are dupes by dunces made: (2)

(1) ["I have heard of a porter, who serves as a knight of the post under one of these operators, and, though he was never sick in his life, has been cured of all the diseases in the dispensary. These are the men whose sagacity has invented elixirs of all sorts, pills, and lozenges, and take it as an affront if you come to them before you are given over by every body else. Their medicines are infallible, and never fail of success — that is, of enriching the doctor, and setting the patient effectually at rest."— BISHOP PEARCE.]

(2) ["There is hardly a man in the world, one would think, so ignorant as not to know that the ordinary quack-doctors, who publish their great abilities in little brown billets, distributed to all who pass by, are to a man impostors and murderers. Yet such is the credulity of the vulgar, and the impudence of those professors, that the affair still goes on, and new promises, of what was never before done, are made every day. What aggravates the jest is, that even this promise has been made as long as the memory of man can trace it, yet nothing performed, and yet still prevails. As I was passing along to-day, a paper given into my hand, by a fellow without a nose, tells us as follows: — 'In Russel Court, over against the Cannon Ball, at the Surgeon's Arms, in Drury Lane, is lately come from his travels, a surgeon who hath practised surgery and physic both by sea and land, these twenty-four years. He (by the blessing) cures the yellow-

That creatures, nature meant should clean our streets,
Have purchased lands and mansions, parks and seats;
Wretches with conscience so obtuse, they leave
Their untaught sons their parents to deceive;
And when they 're laid upon their dying-bed,
No thought of murder comes into their head;
Nor one revengeful ghost to them appears,
To fill the soul with penitential fears.

Yet not the whole of this imposing train
Their gardens, seats, and carriages obtain;
Chiefly, indeed, they to the robbers fall,
Who are most fitted to disgrace them all:
But there is hazard — patents must be bought,
Venders and puffers for the poison sought;

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jaundice, scurvy, dropsy, surfeits, long sea-voyages, campaigns, lying-in, &c., as some people that *has* been lame these thirty years can testify: in short, he cureth all diseases incident to men, women, or children!' If a man could be so indolent as to look upon this havoc of the human species, which is made by vice and ignorance, it would be a good ridiculous work to comment upon the declaration of this accomplished traveller. There is something unaccountably taking among the vulgar in those who come from a great way off. Ignorant people of quality, as many there are of such, dote excessively that way. The ignorants of lower order, who cannot, like the upper ones, be profuse of their money to those recommended by coming from a distance, are no less complaisant than the others; for they venture their lives from the same admiration. But the art of managing mankind is only to make them stare a little, to keep up their astonishment, to let nothing be familiar to them, but ever to have something in their sleeve, in which they must think you are deeper than they are. There is a doctor in Mann Alley, near Wapping, who sets up for curing cataracts, upon the credit of having, as his bill sets forth, lost an eye in the emperor's service. His patients come in upon this, and he shows the muster-roll, which confirms that he was in his Imperial Majesty's troops; and he puts out their eyes with great success. Who would believe that a man should be a doctor for the cure of bursten children, by declaring that his father and grandfather were both bursten?' Yet Charles Irrgolston, next door to the Harp, in Barbican, has made a pretty penny by this operation."— STEELE.]

And then in many a paper through the year,
Must cures and cases, oaths and proofs appear;
Men snatch'd from graves, as they were dropping in,
Their lungs cough'd up, their bones pierced through their skin;
Their liver all one scirrhus, and the frame
Poison'd with evils which they dare not name;
Men who spent all upon physicians' fees,
Who never slept, nor had a moment's ease,
Are now as roaches sound, and all as brisk as bees. (1)

If the sick gudgeons to the bait attend,
And come in shoals, the angler gains his end;
But should the advertising cash be spent,
Ere yet the town has due attention lent,
Then bursts the bubble, and the hungry cheat
Pines for the bread he ill deserves to eat;
It is a lottery, and he shares perhaps
The rich man's feast, or begs the pauper's scraps.

From powerful causes spring th' empiric's gains,
Man's love of life, his weakness, and his pains;
These first induce him the vile trash to try,
Then lend his name, that other men may buy:
This love of life, which in our nature rules,
To vile imposture makes us dupes and tools; (2)

(1) [In an admirable section of the "Miseries of Human Life," a patient, now quite recovered, is made to describe himself as having been, before he met with his favourite *doctor*, "an ulcer rather than a man."]

(2) ["There would be no end of enumerating the several imaginary perfections, and unaccountable artifices, by which this tribe of men ensnare the minds of the vulgar, and gain crowds of admirers. I have seen the whole front of a mountebank's stage, from one end to the other, faced with patents, certificates, medals, and great seals, by which the several princes of Europe have testified their particular respect and esteem for the doctor.

Then pain compels th' impatient soul to seize
On promised hopes of instantaneous ease;
And weakness too with every wish complies,
Worn out and won by importunities.
Troubled with something in your bile or blood,
You think your doctor does you little good;
And grown impatient, you require in haste
The nervous cordial, nor dislike the taste;
It comforts, heals, and strengthens; nay, you think
It makes you better every time you drink;
"Then lend your name"—you're loth, but yet confess
Its powers are great, and so you acquiesce:
Yet think a moment, ere your name you lend,
With whose 't is placed, and what you recommend;
Who tipples brandy will some comfort feel,
But will he to the med'cine set his seal?
Wait, and you 'll find the cordial you admire
Has added fuel to your fever's fire:
Say, should a robber chance your purse to spare,
Would you the honour of the man declare?
Would you assist his purpose? swell his crime?
Besides, he might not spare a second time.
Compassion sometimes sets the fatal sign,
The man was poor, and humbly begg'd a line;

Every great man with a sounding title has been his patient. I believe I have seen twenty mountebanks that have given physic to the Czar of Muscovy. The great Duke of Tuscany escapes no better. The Elector of Brandenburgh was likewise a very good patient. The great condescension of the doctor draws upon him much good-will from his audience; and it is ten to one but, if any one of them be troubled with an aching tooth, his ambition will prompt him to get it drawn by a person who has had so many princes, kings, and emperors under his hands." — ADDISON.

Else how should noble names and titles back
The spreading praise of some advent'rous quack?
But he the moment watches, and entreats
Your honour's name,—your honour joins the cheats;
You judged the med'cine harmless, and you lent
What help you could, and with the best intent;
But can it please you, thus to league with all
Whom he can beg or bribe to swell the scrawl?
Would you these wrappers with your name adorn,
Which hold the poison for the yet unborn?

No class escapes them—from the poor man's pay,
The nostrum takes no trifling part away;
See! those square patent bottles from the shop,
Now decoration to the cupboard's top;
And there a favourite hoard you 'll find within,
Companions meet! the julep and the gin.

Time too with cash is wasted; 't is the fate
Of real helpers to be call'd too late;
This find the sick, when (time and patience gone)
Death with a tenfold terror hurries on.

Suppose the case surpasses human skill,
There comes a quack to flatter weakness still;
What greater evil can a flatterer do,
Than from himself to take the sufferer's view?
To turn from sacred thoughts his reasoning powers,
And rob a sinner of his dying hours?
Yet this they dare, and craving to the last,
In hope's strong bondage hold their victim fast:
For soul or body no concern have they,
All their enquiry, "Can the patient pay?
"And will he swallow draughts until his dying day?"

Observe what ills to nervous females flow,
When the heart flutters, and the pulse is low;
If once induced these cordial sips to try,
All feel the ease, and few the danger fly;
For, while obtain'd, of drams they 've all the force.
And when denied, then drams are the resource.
Nor these the only evils—there are those
Who for the troubled mind prepare repose;
They write: the young are tenderly address'd,
Much danger hinted, much concern express'd;
They dwell on freedoms lads are prone to take,
Which makes the doctor tremble for their sake;
Still if the youthful patient will but trust
In one so kind, so pitiful, and just;
If he will take the tonic all the time,
And hold but moderate intercourse with crime;
The sage will gravely give his honest word,
That strength and spirits shall be both restored;
In plainer English—if you mean to sin,
Fly to the drops, and instantly begin.
Who would not lend a sympathising sigh,
To hear yon infant's pity-moving cry?
That feeble sob, unlike the new-born note,
Which came with vigour from the op'ning throat;
When air and light first rush'd on lungs and eyes,
And there was life and spirit in the cries;
Now an abortive, faint attempt to weep,
Is all we hear; sensation is asleep:
The boy was healthy, and at first express'd
His feelings loudly when he fail'd to rest;
When cramm'd with food, and tighten'd every limb,
To cry aloud, was what pertain'd to him;

Then the good nurse, (who, had she borne a brain,
Had sought the cause that made her babe complain,)
Has all her efforts, loving soul! applied
To set the cry, and not the cause, aside;
She gave her powerful sweet without remorse,
The sleeping cordial — she had tried its force,
Repeating oft: the infant, freed from pain,
Rejected food, but took the dose again,
Sinking to sleep; while she her joy express'd,
That her dear charge could sweetly take his rest:
Soon may she spare her cordial; not a doubt
Remains, but quickly he will rest without.

This moves our grief and pity, and we sigh
To think what numbers from these causes die;
But what contempt and anger should we show,
Did we the lives of these impostors know!

Ere for the world's I left the cares of school,
One I remember who assumed the fool;
A part well suited—when the idler boys
Would shout around him, and he loved the noise;
They called him Neddy; — Neddy had the art
To play with skill his ignominious part;
When he his trifles would for sale display,
And act the mimic for a school boy's pay.
For many years he plied his humble trade,
And used his tricks and talents to persuade;
The fellow barely read, but chanced to look
Among the fragments of a tatter'd book;
Where, after many efforts made to spell
One puzzling word, he found it *oxymel;*
A potent thing, 'twas said to cure the ills
Of ailing lungs — the *oxymel of squills;*

Squills he procured, but found the bitter strong
And most unpleasant; none would take it long;
But the pure acid and the sweet would make
A med'cine numbers would for pleasure take.
There was a fellow near, an artful knave,
Who knew the plan, and much assistance gave;
He wrote the puffs, and every talent plied
To make it sell: it sold, and then he died.
Now all the profit fell to Ned's control,
And Pride and Avarice quarrell'd for his soul;
When mighty profits by the trash were made,
Pride built a palace, Avarice groan'd and paid;
Pride placed the signs of grandeur all about,
And Avarice barr'd his friends and children out
Now see him Doctor! yes, the idle fool,
The butt, the robber of the lads at school;
Who then knew nothing, nothing since acquired,
Became a doctor, honour'd and admired;
His dress, his frown, his dignity were such, much;
Some who had known him thought his knowledge
Nay, men of skill, of apprehension quick,
Spite of their knowledge, trusted him when sick
Though he could neither reason, write, nor spell,
They yet had hope his trash would make them well;
And while they scorn'd his parts, they took his
oxymel.
Oh! when his nerves had once received a shock,
Sir Isaac Newton might have gone to Rock: (1)
Hence impositions of the grossest kind,
Hence thought is feeble, understanding blind;

(1) An empiric who *flourished* at the same time with this great man.

Hence sums enormous by those cheats are made,
And deaths unnumber'd by their dreadful trade. (1)
Alas! in vain is my contempt express'd,
To stronger passions are their words address'd;
To pain, to fear, to terror their appeal,
To those who, weakly reasoning, strongly feel.
What then our hopes?—perhaps there may by law
Be method found, these pests to curb and awe;
Yet in this land of freedom, law is slack
With any being to commence attack;
Then let us trust to science — there are those
Who can their falsehoods and their frauds disclose,
All their vile trash detect, and their low tricks expose:
Perhaps their numbers may in time confound
Their arts—as scorpions give themselves the wound:
For when these curers dwell in every place,
While of the cured we not a man can trace,
Strong truth may then the public mind persuade,
And spoil the fruits of this nefarious trade.

(1) ["So great are the difficulties of tracing out the hidden causes of the evils to which the frame of man is subject, that the most candid of the profession have ever allowed and lamented how unavoidably they are in the dark. So that the best medicines administered by the wisest heads shall often do the mischief they were intended to prevent. These are misfortunes to which we are subject in this state of darkness; but when men without skill, without education, without knowledge either of the distemper, or even of what they sell, make merchandise of the miserable, and, from a dishonest principle, trifle with the pains of the unfortunate,—too often with their lives, and from the mere motive of a dishonest gain,—every such instance of a person bereft of life by the hand of ignorance can be considered in no other light than a murder."—STERNE.]

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VIII.

TRADES.

Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Recte beatum: rectius occupat
Nomen Beati, qui Deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti,'
Duramque callet pauperiem pati.

Hor. lib. iv. *Ode* 9. (1)

Non propter vitam faciunt patrimonia quidam,
Sed vitio cæci propter patrimonia vivunt.—Juvenal, *Sat.* 12. (2)

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(1) ["Not he, of wealth immense possess'd,
Tasteless who piles his massy gold,
Among the number of the blest
Should have his glorious name enroll'd.
He better claims the glorious name, who knows
With wisdom to enjoy what Heaven bestows."—Francis.]

(2) ["Few gain to live, Corvinus, few or none,
But, blind with avarice, live to gain alone."—Gifford.]

No extensive manufactories in the Borough: yet considerable Fortunes made there — Ill Judgment of Parents in disposing of their Sons — The best educated not the most likely to succeed — Instance — Want of Success compensated by the lenient Power of some Avocations — The Naturalist — The Weaver an Entomologist, &c. — A Prize-Flower — Story of Walter and William.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER VIII.

TRADES.

Of manufactures, trade, inventions rare,
Steam-towers and looms, you'd know our Borough's share—
'Tis small: we boast not these rich subjects here,
Who hazard thrice ten thousand pounds a year;
We've no huge buildings, where incessant noise
Is made by springs and spindles, girls and boys;
Where, 'mid such thundering sounds, the maiden's song
Is "Harmony in Uproar"(1) all day long.
Still common minds with us in common trade,
Have gain'd more wealth than ever student made;
And yet a merchant, when he gives his son
His college-learning, thinks his duty done;
A way to wealth he leaves his boy to find,
Just when he's made for the discovery blind.

(1) The title of a short piece of humour by Arbuthnot.

Jones and his wife perceived their elder boy
Took to his learning, and it gave them joy;
This they encouraged, and were bless'd to see
Their son a fellow with a high degree;
A living fell, he married, and his sire
Declared 'twas all a father could require;
Children then bless'd them, and when letters came,
The parents proudly told each grandchild's name.
Meantime the sons at home in trade were placed,
Money their object—just the father's taste;
Saving he lived and long, and when he died,
He gave them all his fortune to divide:
"Martin," said he, "at vast expense was taught;
"He gain'd his wish, and has the ease he sought."
Thus the good priest (the Christian scholar!) finds
What estimate is made by vulgar minds;
He sees his brothers, who had every gift
Of thriving, now assisted in their thrift;
While he whom learning, habits, all prevent,
Is largely mulct for each impediment.
Yet let us own that Trade has much of chance,
Not all the careful by their care advance;
With the same parts and prospects, one a seat
Builds for himself; one finds it in the Fleet.
Then to the wealthy you will see denied,
Comforts and joys that with the poor abide:
There are who labour through the year, and yet
No more have gain'd than—not to be in debt;
Who still maintain the same laborious course,
Yet pleasure hails them from some favourite source;

And health, amusements, children, wife, or friend,
With life's dull views their consolations blend.
Nor these alone possess the lenient power
Of soothing life in the desponding hour;
Some favourite studies, some delightful care,
The mind, with trouble and distresses, share;
And by a coin, a flower, a verse, a boat,
The stagnant spirits have been set afloat;
They pleased at first, and then the habit grew,
Till the fond heart no higher pleasure knew;
Till, from all cares and other comforts freed,
Th' important nothing took in life the lead.
With all his phlegm, it broke a Dutchman's heart,
At a vast price, with one loved root to part;(1)
And toys like these fill many a British mind,
Although their hearts are found of firmer kind.
Oft have I smiled the happy pride to see
Of humble tradesmen, in their evening glee;
When of some pleasing, fancied good possess'd,
Each grew alert, was busy, and was bless'd;
Whether the call-bird yield the hour's delight,(2)
Or, magnified in microscope, the mite;

(1) The tulip mania prevailed, in 1637, to such an extent in Holland, that a single root has been sold for five thousand florins, together with a new carriage, two grey horses, and a complete harness. The tulips, however, were seldom delivered. A nobleman bespoke of a merchant a tulip root, to be delivered in six months, at the price of a thousand florins. During these six months the price of that species of tulip must have risen or fallen, or remained as it was. But instead of demanding his tulip then, he paid or received the difference of price. This singular species of gaming could, from its nature, only go to a limited extent: the value of tulip roots began to fall. The sellers were then anxious to deliver the roots in natura; but the buyers would not receive them. The consequence was, that tulips fell very speedily to their intrinsic value, and the gambling was at an end.

(2) Different birds require different sorts of calls; but they are mostly

Or whether tumblers, croppers, carriers seize
The gentle mind, they rule it and they please.
There is my friend the Weaver; strong desires
Reign in his breast; 'tis beauty he admires:
See! to the shady grove he wings his way,
And feels in hope the raptures of the day—
Eager he looks; and soon, to glad his eyes,
From the sweet bower, by nature form'd, arise
Bright troops of virgin moths and fresh-born butterflies; [sleep,
Who broke that morning from their half-year's
To fly o'er flowers where they were wont to creep.
Above the sovereign oak, a sovereign skims,
The purple Emp'ror, strong in wing and limbs:
There fair Camilla takes her flight serene,
Adonis blue, and Paphia silver-queen;
With every filmy fly from mead or bower,
And hungry Sphinx who threads the honey'd flower;
She o'er the Larkspur's bed, where sweets abound,
Views ev'ry bell, and hums th' approving sound;
Poised on her busy plumes, with feeling nice
She draws from every flower, nor tries a floret twice.
He fears no bailiff's wrath, no baron's blame,
His is untax'd and undisputed game;
Nor less the place of curious plant he knows;(1)
He both his Flora and his Fauna shows;

composed of a pipe or reed, with a little leather purse or bag, somewhat in the form of a bellows; which, by the motion given thereto, yields a noise like that of the species of bird to be taken.

(1) In botanical language "*the habitat*," the favourite soil or situation of he more scarce species.

For him is blooming in its rich array
The glorious flower which bore the palm away;
In vain a rival tried his utmost art,
His was the prize, and joy o'erflow'd his heart.
" This, this! is beauty; cast, I pray, your eyes
" On this my glory! see the grace! the size!
" Was ever stem so tall, so stout, so strong,
" Exact in breadth, in just proportion, long!
" These brilliant hues are all distinct and clean,
" No kindred tint, no blending streaks between;
" This is no shaded, run-off(1), pin-eyed(2) thing,
" A king of flowers, a flower for England's king:
" I own my pride, and thank the favouring star,
" Which shed such beauty on my fair Bizarre." (3)
Thus may the poor the cheap indulgence seize,
While the most wealthy pine and pray for ease;
Content not always waits upon success,
And more may he enjoy who profits less.
Walter and *William* took (their father dead)
Jointly the trade to which they both were bred;
When fix'd, they married, and they quickly found
With due success their honest labours crown'd:

(1) This, it must be acknowledged, is contrary to the opinion of Thomson, and I believe of some other poets, who, in describing the varying hues of our most beautiful flowers, have considered them as lost and blended with each other; whereas their beauty, in the eye of a florist (and, I conceive, in that of the uninitiated also), depends upon the distinctness of their colours: the stronger the bounding line, and the less they break into the neighbouring tint, so much the richer and more valuable is the flower esteemed.

(2) An auricula, or any other single flower, is so called when the *stigma* (the part which arises from the seed-vessel) is protruded beyond the tube of the flower, and becomes visible.

(3) This word, so far as it relates to flowers, means those variegated with three or more colours irregularly and indeterminately.

Few were their losses, but although a few,
Walter was vex'd, and somewhat peevish grew:
"You put your trust in every pleading fool,"
Said he to William, and grew strange and cool.
"Brother, forbear," he answer'd; "take your due,
"Nor let my lack of caution injure you:"
Half friends they parted,—better so to close,
Than longer wait to part entirely foes.

Walter had knowledge, prudence, jealous care;
He let no idle views his bosom share;
He never thought nor felt for other men—
"Let one mind one, and all are minded then."
Friends he respected, and believed them just,
But they were men, and he would no man trust;
He tried and watch'd his people day and night,—
The good it harm'd not; for the bad 't was right:
He could their humours bear, nay disrespect,
But he could yield no pardon to neglect;
That all about him were of him afraid,
"Was right," he said—"so should we be obey'd."

These merchant-maxims, much good fortune too,
And ever keeping one grand point in view,
To vast amount his once small portion drew.

William was kind and easy; he complied
With all requests, or grieved when he denied;
To please his wife he made a costly trip,
To please his child he let a bargain slip;
Prone to compassion, mild with the distress'd,
He bore with all who poverty profess'd,
And some would he assist, nor one would he arrest.
He had some loss at sea, bad debts at land,
His clerk absconded with some bills in hand,
And plans so often fail'd that he no longer plann'd.

To a small house (his brother's) he withdrew,
At easy rent—the man was not a Jew;
And there his losses and his cares he bore,
Nor found that want of wealth could make him poor.

No, he in fact was rich; nor could he move,
But he was follow'd by the looks of love;
All he had suffer'd, every former grief,
Made those around more studious in relief;
He saw a cheerful smile in every face,
And lost all thoughts of error and disgrace.

Pleasant it was to see them in their walk
Round their small garden, and to hear them talk;
Free are their children, but their love refrains
From all offence—none murmurs, none complains;
Whether a book amused them, speech or play,
Their looks were lively, and their hearts were gay:
There no forced efforts for delight were made,
Joy came with prudence, and without parade;
Their common comforts they had all in view,
Light were their troubles, and their wishes few:
Thrift made them easy for the coming day,
Religion took the dread of death away;
A cheerful spirit still ensured content,
And love smiled round them wheresoe'er they went.

Walter, meantime, with all his wealth's increase,
Gain'd many points, but could not purchase peace:
When he withdrew from business for an hour,
Some fled his presence, all confess'd his power;
He sought affection, but received instead
Fear undisguised, and love-repelling dread;

He look'd around him—" Harriet, dost thou love?"
" I do my duty," said the timid dove;
" Good Heav'n, your duty! prithee, tell me now—
" To love and honour—was not that your vow?
" Come, my good Harriet, I would gladly seek
" Your inmost thought—Why can't the woman speak?
" Have you not all things?"—" Sir, do I complain?"—
" No, that's my part, which I perform in vain;
" I want a simple answer, and direct—
" But you evade; yes! 'tis as I suspect.
" Come then, my children! Watt! upon your knees
" Vow that you love me."—" Yes, sir, if you please."—
" Again! By Heav'n, it mads me; I require
" Love, and they'll do whatever I desire:
" Thus too my people shun me; I would spend
" A thousand pounds to get a single friend;
" I would be happy—I have means to pay
" For love and friendship, and you run away;
" Ungrateful creatures! why, you seem to dread
" My very looks; I know you wish me dead.
" Come hither, Nancy! you must hold me dear;
" Hither, I say; why! what have you to fear?
" You see I'm gentle—Come, you trifler, come;
" My God! she trembles!—Idiot, leave the room!
" Madam! your children hate me; I suppose
" They know their cue: you make them all my foes;
" I've not a friend in all the world—not one:
" I'd be a bankrupt sooner; nay, 'tis done;

" In every better hope of life I fail,
" You're all tormentors, and my house a jail;
" Out of my sight! I'll sit and make my will—
" What, glad to go? stay, devils, and be still;
" 'Tis to your Uncle's cot you wish to run,
" To learn to live at ease and be undone;
" Him you can love, who lost his whole estate,
" And I, who gain you fortunes, have your hate;
" 'Tis in my absence, you yourselves enjoy:
" Tom! are you glad to lose me? tell me, boy:
" Yes! does he answer?—Yes! upon my soul;
" No awe, no fear, no duty, no control!
" Away! away! ten thousand devils seize
" All I possess, and plunder where they please!
" What's wealth to me?—yes, yes! it gives me
" sway,
" And you shall feel it—Go! begone, I say."(1)

(1) If I have in this letter praised the good-humour of a man confessedly too inattentive to business, and if, in the one on AMUSEMENTS, I have written somewhat sarcastically of " the brick-floored parlour which the butcher lets;" be credit given to me, that, in the one case, I had no intention to apologise for idleness, nor any design in the other to treat with contempt the resources of the poor. The good-humour is considered as the consolation of disappointment; and the room is so mentioned because the lodger is vain. Most of my readers will perceive this: but I shall be sorry if by any I am supposed to make pleas for the vices of men, or treat their wants and infirmities with derision or with disdain.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IX.

AMUSEMENTS.

Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis,
Ut possis animo quemvis sufferre laborem. — CATULL. lib. 3.

. . . . . Nostra fatiscat
Laxaturque chelys, vires instigat alitque
Tempestiva quies, major post otia virtus.
STATIUS, *Sylv.* lib. 4.

Jamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant;
Omnia pontus erant: deerant quoque littora ponto.
OVID. *Metamorph.* li. bl.

Common Amusements of a Bathing-place — Morning Rides, Walks, &c. — Company resorting to the Town — Different Choice of Lodgings — Cheap Indulgences — Sea-side Walks — Wealthy Invalid — Summer-Evening on the Sands — Sea Productions — "Water parted from the Sea" — Winter Views serene — In what cases to be avoided — Sailing upon the River — A small Islet of Sand off the Coast — Visited by Company — Covered by the Flowing of the Tide — — Adventure in that Place.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER IX.

AMUSEMENTS.

Of our Amusements ask you?—We amuse
Ourselves and friends with seaside walks and views,
Or take a morning ride, a novel, or the news;
Or, seeking nothing, glide about the street,
And so engaged, with various parties meet;
Awhile we stop, discourse of wind and tide,
Bathing and books, the raffle, and the ride:
Thus, with the aid which shops and sailing give,
Life passes on; 't is labour, but we live.

When evening comes, our invalids awake,
Nerves cease to tremble, heads forbear to ache;
Then cheerful meals the sunken spirits raise,
Cards or the dance, wine, visiting, or plays.

Soon as the Season comes, and crowds arrive,
To their superior rooms the wealthy drive;
Others look round for lodging snug and small,
Such is their taste—they 've hatred to a hall;
Hence one his fav'rite habitation gets,
The brick-floor'd parlour which the butcher lets;

Where, through his single light, he may regard
The various business of a common yard,
Bounded by backs of buildings form'd of clay,
By stable, sties, and coops, et cætera.

The needy-vain, themselves awhile to shun,
For dissipation to these dog-holes run;
Where each (assuming petty pomp) appears,
And quite forgets the shopboard and the shears.

For them are cheap amusements: they may slip
Beyond the town and take a private dip;
When they may urge that, to be safe they mean,
They 've heard there 's danger in a light machine;
They too can gratis move the quays about,
And gather kind replies to every doubt;
There they a pacing, lounging tribe may view,
The stranger's guides, who 've little else to do;
The Borough's placemen, where no more they gain
Than keeps them idle, civil, poor, and vain.
Then may the poorest with the wealthy look
On ocean, glorious page of Nature's book!
May see its varying views in every hour,
All softness now, then rising with all power,
As sleeping to invite, or threat'ning to devour:
'T is this which gives us all our choicest views;
Its waters heal us, and its shores amuse. (1)

See! those fair nymphs upon that rising strand,
Yon long salt lake has parted from the land;
Well pleased to press that path, so clean, so pure,
To seem in danger, yet to feel secure;

(1) [Original edition: —
'T is this which gives us all our choicest views;
And dull the mind they never can amuse.]

Trifling with terror, while they strive to shun
The curling billows; laughing as they run;
They know the neck that joins the shore and sea,
Or, ah! how changed that fearless laugh would be.

Observe how various Parties take their way,
By seaside walks, or make the sand-hills gay;
There group'd are laughing maids and sighing swains,
And some apart who feel unpitied pains;
Pains from diseases, pains which those who feel,
To the physician, not the fair, reveal:
For nymphs (propitious to the lover's sigh)
Leave these poor patients to complain and die.

Lo! where on that huge anchor sadly leans
That sick tall figure, lost in other scenes;
He late from India's clime impatient sail'd,
There, as his fortune grew, his spirits fail'd;
For each delight, in search of wealth he went,
For ease alone, the wealth acquired is spent —
And spent in vain; enrich'd, aggrieved, he sees
The envied poor possess'd of joy and ease:
And now he flies from place to place, to gain
Strength for enjoyment, and still flies in vain:
Mark! with what sadness, of that pleasant crew,
Boist'rous in mirth, he takes a transient view;
And fixing then his eye upon the sea,
Thinks what has been and what must shortly be:
Is it not strange that man should health destroy,
For joys that come when he is dead to joy?

Now is it pleasant in the Summer-eve,
When a broad shore retiring waters leave,
Awhile to wait upon the firm fair sand,
When all is calm at sea, all still at land;

And there the ocean's produce to explore,
As floating by, or rolling on the shore;
Those living jellies (1) which the flesh inflame,
Fierce as a nettle, and from that its name;
Some in huge masses, some that you may bring
In the small compass of a lady's ring;
Figured by hand divine — there 's not a gem
Wrought by man's art to be compared to them;
Soft, brilliant, tender, through the wave they glow,
And make the moonbeam brighter where they flow.
Involved in sea-wrack, here you find a race,
Which science doubting, knows not where to place;
On shell or stone is dropp'd the embryo-seed, (2)
And quickly vegetates a vital breed. (3)

While thus with pleasing wonder you inspect
Treasures the vulgar in their scorn reject,
See as they float along th' entangled weeds
Slowly approach, upborne on bladdery beads;

(1) Some of the smaller species of the Medusa (sea-nettle) are exquisitely beautiful: their form is nearly oval, varied with serrated longitudinal lines; they are extremely tender, and by no means which I am acquainted with can be preserved, for they soon dissolve in either spirit of wine or water, and lose every vestige of their shape, and indeed of their substance: the larger species are found in misshapen masses of many pounds weight; these, when handled, have the effect of the nettle; and the stinging is often accompanied or succeeded by the more unpleasant feeling, perhaps in a slight degree resembling that caused by the torpedo.

(2) Various tribes and species of marine vermes are here meant: that which so nearly resembles a vegetable in its form, and perhaps, in some degree, manner of growth, is the coralline called by naturalists Sertularia; of which there are many species in almost every part of the coast. The animal protrudes its many claws (apparently in search of prey) from certain pellucid vesicles, which proceed from a horny, tenacious, branchy stem.

(3) [The topics which this evening view on the sea-shore embraces have never, as far as we recollect, been so distinctly treated of in poetry: they are here recorded, too, in very appropriate numbers. The versification, of the latter part of the passage particularly, is brilliant and *éveillée*, and has something of the pleasing restlessness of the ocean itself. — GIFFORD.]

Wait till they land, and you shall then behold
The fiery sparks those tangled fronds infold,
Myriads of living points (1); th' unaided eye
Can but the fire and not the form descry.
And now your view upon the ocean turn,
And there the splendour of the waves discern;
Cast but a stone, or strike them with an oar,
And you shall flames within the deep explore;
Or scoop the stream phosphoric as you stand,
And the cold flames shall flash along your hand;
When, lost in wonder, you shall walk and gaze
On weeds that sparkle, and on waves that blaze. (2)

(1) These are said to be a minute kind of animal of the same class: when it does not shine, it is invisible to the naked eye.

(2) For the cause or causes of this phenomenon, which is sometimes, though rarely, observed on our coasts, I must refer the reader to the writers on philosophy and natural history. —[There are few phenomena in nature much more striking than the luminous appearance exhibited by the water of the ocean, particularly in tempestuous weather; terrific, in particular, to landsmen in these cases, as it is resplendent and beautiful in the calms of summer. It has accordingly not only been an object of much remark among common observers, but has excited the attention of naturalists at all times, so as to have led to much discussion. From the time of Pliny downwards, frequent enquiries have been made respecting the cause, and accordingly many different theories have been proffered. It was long taken for granted that this property belonged to the water itself, not to any bodies contained in it. Mayer, and others who followed him, considered that this phenomenon depended on the same cause as the light emitted by the diamond and other substances after exposure to the sun's rays. Others were content with calling the light phosphoric, and with supposing that sea-water was endowed with the property of phosphorescence. Another party attributed the light to the putrefaction of sea water, although it was not explained what the connection was between putrefaction and phosphorescence. The experiments of Dr. Hulme made a nearer approximation to the true cause, by showing that the luminous secretion or matter attached to the mucus of certain fishes was diffusible in water. Later or more accurate naturalists, and seamen also, have, however, observed that some marine worms and insects were luminous; and thus it was admitted that some, at least, of the luminous appearances of the sea might be produced by these: but to Dr. Macculloch we are indebted for having first brought the whole of this

The ocean too has Winter-views serene,
When all you see through densest fog is seen;
When you can hear the fishers near at hand
Distinctly speak, yet see not where they stand;
Or sometimes them and not their boat discern,
Or half-conceal'd some figure at the stern;
The view's all bounded, and from side to side
Your utmost prospect but a few ells wide;
Boys who, on shore, to sea the pebble cast,
Will hear it strike against the viewless mast;
While the stern boatman growls his fierce disdain,
At whom he knows not, whom he threats in vain.

'T is pleasant then to view the nets float past,
Net after net till you have seen the last;
And as you wait till all beyond you slip,
A boat comes gliding from an anchor'd ship,
Breaking the silence with the dipping oar,
And their own tones, as labouring for the shore;
Those measured tones which with the scene agree,
And give a sadness to serenity.

All scenes like these the tender Maid should shun,
Nor to a misty beach in autumn run;
Much should she guard against the evening cold,
And her slight shape with fleecy warmth infold;
This she admits, but not with so much ease
Gives up the night-walk when th' attendants please:
Her have I seen, pale, vapour'd through the day,
With crowded parties at the midnight play;

---

question into one clear point of view, in his work on the Western Islands of Scotland, and for so great an extension of the luminous property to the marine species, as to have erected this into a general law. — BREWSTER.]

Faint in the morn, no powers could she exert;
At night with Pam delighted and alert;
In a small shop she 's raffled with a crowd,
Breath'd the thick air, and cough'd and laugh'd aloud;
She who will tremble if her eye explore [floor;"
" The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on
Whom the kind doctor charged with shaking head,
At early hour to quit the beaux for bed:
She has, contemning fear, gone down the dance,
Till she perceived the rosy morn advance;
Then has she wonder'd, fainting o'er her tea,
Her drops and julep should so useless be:
Ah! sure her joys must ravish every sense,
Who buys a portion at such vast expense.
Among those joys, 't is one at eve to sail
On the broad River with a favourite gale;
When no rough waves upon the bosom ride,
But the keel cuts, nor rises on the tide;
Safe from the stream the nearer gunwale stands,
Where playful children trail their idle hands:
Or strive to catch long grassy leaves that float
On either side of the impeded boat;
What time the moon arising shows the mud,
A shining border to the silver flood:
When, by her dubious light, the meanest views,
Chalk, stones, and stakes, obtain the richest hues;
And when the cattle, as they gazing stand,
Seem nobler objects than when view'd from land:
Then anchor'd vessels in the way appear,
And sea-boys greet them as they pass — " What cheer?"

The sleeping shell-ducks at the sound arise,
And utter loud their unharmonious cries;
Fluttering they move their weedy beds among,
Or instant diving, hide their plumeless young.

Along the Wall, returning from the town,
The weary rustic homeward wanders down;
Who stops and gazes at such joyous crew,
And feels his envy rising at the view;
He the light speech and laugh indignant hears,
And feels more press'd by want, more vex'd by fears.

Ah! go in peace, good fellow, to thine home,
Nor fancy these escape the general doom;
Gay as they seem, be sure with them are hearts'
With sorrow tried; there 's sadness in their parts:
If thou couldst see them when they think alone,
Mirth, music, friends, and these amusements gone;
Couldst thou discover every secret ill
That pains their spirit, or resists their will;
Couldst thou behold forsaken Love's distress,
Or Envy's pang at glory and success,
Or Beauty, conscious of the spoils of Time,
Or Guilt alarm'd when Memory shows the crime;
All that gives sorrow, terror, grief, and gloom;
Content would cheer thee trudging to thine home.(1)

There are, 't is true, who lay their cares aside,
And bid some hours in calm enjoyment glide;
Perchance some fair-one to the sober night
Adds (by the sweetness of her song) delight;

(1) This is not offered as a reasonable source of contentment, but as one motive for resignation. There would not be so much envy, if there were more discernment.

And as the music on the water floats,
Some bolder shore returns the soften'd notes;
Then, youth, beware, for all around conspire
To banish caution and to wake desire;
The day's amusement, feasting, beauty, wine,
These accents sweet and this soft hour combine,
When most unguarded, then to win that heart of thine:
But see, they land! the fond enchantment flies,
And in its place life's common views arise.

Sometimes a Party, row'd from town, will land
On a small islet form'd of shelly sand,
Left by the water when the tides are low,
But which the floods in their return o'erflow:
There will they anchor, pleased awhile to view
The watery waste, a prospect wild and new;
The now receding billows give them space,
On either side the growing shores to pace;
And then returning, they contract the scene,
Till small and smaller grows the walk between;
As sea to sea approaches, shore to shores,
Till the next ebb the sandy isle restores.

Then what alarm! what danger and dismay,
If all their trust, their boat should drift away;
And once it happen'd—Gay the friends advanced,
They walk'd, they ran, they play'd, they sang, they danced;
The urns were boiling, and the cups went round,
And not a grave or thoughtful face was found;
On the bright sand they trod with nimble feet,
Dry shelly sand that made the summer-seat;

The wondering mews flew fluttering o'er the head,
And waves ran softly up their shining bed.
Some form'd a party from the rest to stray,
Pleased to collect the trifles in their way;
These to behold they call their friends around,
No friends can hear, or hear another sound;
Alarm'd, they hasten, yet perceive not why,
But catch the fear that quickens as they fly.
For lo! a lady sage, who paced the sand
With her fair children, one in either hand,
Intent on home, had turn'd, and saw the boat
Slipp'd from her moorings, and now far afloat;
She gazed, she trembled, and though faint her call,
It seem'd, like thunder, to confound them all.
Their sailor-guides, the boatman and his mate,
Had drank, and slept regardless of their state;
"Awake," they cried aloud! "Alarm the shore!
"Shout all, or never shall we reach it more!"
Alas! no shout the distant land can reach,
Nor eye behold them from the foggy beach:
Again they join in one loud powerful cry,
Then cease, and eager listen for reply;
None came—the rising wind blew sadly by:
They shout once more, and then they turn aside,
To see how quickly flow'd the coming tide;
Between each cry they find the waters steal
On their strange prison, and new horrors feel;
Foot after foot on the contracted ground
The billows fall, and dreadful is the sound;
Less and yet less the sinking isle became,
And there was wailing, weeping, wrath, and blame.

Had one been there, with spirit strong and high,
Who could observe, as he prepared to die,
He might have seen of hearts the varying kind,
And traced the movement of each different mind:
He might have seen, that not the gentle maid
Was more than stern and haughty man afraid;
Such, calmly grieving, will their fears suppress,
And silent prayers to Mercy's throne address;
While fiercer minds, impatient, angry, loud,
Force their vain grief on the reluctant crowd:
The party's patron, sorely sighing, cried,
"Why would you urge me? I at first denied."
Fiercely they answer'd, "Why will you complain,
"Who saw no danger, or was warn'd in vain?"
A few essay'd the troubled soul to calm,
But dread prevail'd, and anguish and alarm.

Now rose the water through the lessening sand,
And they seem'd sinking while they yet could stand.
The sun went down, they look'd from side to side,
Nor aught except the gathering sea descried;
Dark and more dark, more wet, more cold it grew
And the most lively bade to hope adieu;
Children, by love then lifted from the seas,
Felt not the waters at the parents' knees,
But wept aloud; the wind increased the sound,
And the cold billows as they broke around.

"Once more, yet once again, with all our strength,
"Cry to the land—we may be heard at length."
Vain hope if yet unseen! but hark! an oar,
That sound of bliss! comes dashing to their shore;

Still, still the water rises, "Haste!" they cry,
"Oh! hurry, seamen; in delay we die;"
(Seamen were these, who in their ship perceived
The drifted boat, and thus her crew relieved.)
And now the keel just cuts the cover'd sand,
Now to the gunwale stretches every hand:
With trembling pleasure all confused embark,
And kiss the tackling of their welcome ark;
While the most giddy, as they reach the shore,
Think of their danger, and their GOD adore.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER X.

CLUBS AND SOCIAL MEETINGS.

——Non iter lances mensasque nitentes,
Cum stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, et cum
Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat;
Verum hic impransi mecum disquirite.—Hor. *Sat.* ii. lib. 2.(1)

——O prodiga rerum
Luxuries, nunquam parvo contenta paratu,
Et quæsitorum terrâ pelagoque ciborum
Ambitiosa fames, et lautæ gloria mensæ.—Lucan. lib. 4. (2)

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(1) ["Let's talk, my friends, but talk before we dine.
Not when a gilt buffet's reflected pride
Turns you from sound philosophy aside;
Not when from plate to plate your eyeballs roll,
And the brain dances to the mantling bowl."—Pope's *Imit.*]

(2) ["Behold! ye sons of luxury, behold!
Who scatter in excess your lavish gold;
You who the wealth of frugal ages waste
T' indulge a wanton supercilious taste;
For whom all earth, all ocean are explored,
To spread the various proud voluptuous board."—Rowe.]

Desire of Country Gentlemen for Town Associations — Book-clubs — Too much of literary Character expected from them — Literary Conversation prevented: by Feasting: by Cards — Good, notwithstanding, results — Card-club with Eagerness resorted to — Players — Umpires at the Whist Table — Petulances of Temper there discovered — Free-and-easy Club: not perfectly easy or free — Freedom, how interrupted — The superior Member — Termination of the Evening — Drinking and Smoking Clubs — The Midnight Conversation of the delaying Members — Society of the poorer Inhabitants: its Use: gives Pride and Consequence to the humble Character — Pleasant Habitations of the frugal Poor — Sailor returning to his Family — Freemasons' Club — The Mystery — What its Origin — Its professed Advantages — Griggs and Gregorians — A Kind of Masons — Reflections on these various Societies.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER X.

CLUBS AND SOCIAL MEETINGS.

You say you envy in your calm retreat
Our social Meetings;—'tis with joy we meet;
In these our parties you are pleased to find
Good sense and wit, with intercourse of mind;
Composed of men, who read, reflect, and write,
Who, when they meet, must yield and share delight:
To you our Book-club has peculiar charm,
For which you sicken in your quiet farm;
Here you suppose us at our leisure placed,
Enjoying freedom, and displaying taste;
With wisdom cheerful, temperately gay,
Pleased to enjoy, and willing to display.

If thus your envy gives your ease its gloom,
Give wings to fancy, and among us come:
We're now assembled; you may soon attend—
I'll introduce you—"Gentlemen, my friend."

"Now are you happy? you have pass'd a night
"In gay discourse, and rational delight."

" Alas! not so: for how can mortals think,
" Or thoughts exchange, if thus they eat and drink?
" No! I confess, when we had fairly dined,
" That was no time for intercourse of mind;
" There was each dish prepared with skill t'invite,
" And to detain the struggling appetite;
" On such occasions minds with one consent
" Are to the comforts of the body lent;
" There was no pause — the wine went quickly round,
" Till struggling Fancy was by Bacchus bound;
" Wine is to wit as water thrown on fire,
" By duly sprinkling both are raised the higher;
" Thus largely dealt, the vivid blaze they choke,
" And all the genial flame goes off in smoke."
" But when no more your boards these loads contain,
" When wine no more o'erwhelms the labouring brain,
" But serves, a gentle stimulus; we know
" How wit must sparkle, and how fancy flow."

It might be so, but no such club-days come;
We always find these dampers in the room:
If to converse were all that brought us here,
A few odd members would in turn appear;
Who dwelling nigh, would saunter in and out,
O'erlook the list, and toss the books about;
Or yawning read them, walking up and down,
Just as the loungers in the shops in town;
Till fancying nothing would their minds amuse,
They 'd push them by, and go in search of news.

But our attractions are a stronger sort,
The earliest dainties and the oldest port;
All enter then with glee in every look,
And not a member thinks about a book.
Still, let me own, there are some vacant hours,
When minds might work, and men exert their powers:
Ere wine to folly spurs the giddy guest,
But gives to wit its vigour and its zest;
Then might we reason, might in turn display
Our several talents, and be wisely gay;
We might—but who a tame discourse regards,
When Whist is named, and we behold the Cards?
We from that time are neither grave nor gay;
Our thought, our care, our business is to play:
Fix'd on these spots and figures, each attends
Much to his partners, nothing to his friends.
Our public cares, the long, the warm debate,
That kept our patriots from their beds so late;
War, peace, invasion, all we hope or dread,
Vanish like dreams when men forsake their bed;
And groaning nations and contending kings
Are all forgotten for these painted things:
Paper and paste, vile figures and poor spots,
Level all minds, philosophers and sots;
And give an equal spirit, pause, and force,
Join'd with peculiar diction, to discourse:
"Who deals?—you led—we're three by cards—had you
"Honour in hand?"—"Upon my honour, two."
Hour after hour, men thus contending sit,
Grave without sense, and pointed without wit.

Thus it appears these envied Clubs possess
No certain means of social happiness;
Yet there's a good that flows from scenes like these—
Man meets with man at leisure and at ease;
We to our neighbours and our equals come,
And rub off pride that man contracts at home;
For there, admitted master, he is prone
To claim attention and to talk alone:
But here he meets with neither son nor spouse;
No humble cousin to his bidding bows;
To his raised voice his neighbours' voices rise,
To his high look as lofty look replies;
When much he speaks, he finds that ears are closed,
And certain signs inform him when he's prosed;
Here all the value of a listener know,
And claim, in turn, the favour they bestow.

No pleasure gives the speech, when all would speak,
And all in vain a civil hearer seek.
To chance alone we owe the free discourse,
In vain you purpose what you cannot force;
'T is when the favourite themes unbidden spring,
That fancy soars with such unwearied wing;
Then may you call in aid the moderate glass,
But let it slowly and unprompted pass;
So shall there all things for the end unite,
And give that hour of rational delight.

Men to their Clubs repair, themselves to please,
To care for nothing, and to take their ease;
In fact, for play, for wine, for news they come:
Discourse is shared with friends or found at home.

But Cards with Books are incidental things;
We've nights devoted to these queens and kings:
Then if we choose the social game, we may;
Now 't is a duty, and we're bound to play;
Nor ever meeting of the social kind
Was more engaging, yet had less of mind.

Our eager parties, when the lunar light
Throws its full radiance on the festive night,
Of either sex, with punctual hurry come,
And fill, with one accord, an ample room;
Pleased, the fresh packs on cloth of green they see,
And seizing, handle with preluding glee;
They draw, they sit, they shuffle, cut and deal;
Like friends assembled, but like foes to feel:
But yet not all, — a happier few have joys
Of mere amusement, and their cards are toys;
No skill nor art, nor fretful hopes have they,
But while their friends are gaming, laugh and play.

Others there are, the veterans of the game,
Who owe their pleasure to their envied fame;
Through many a year, with hard-contested strife,
Have they attain'd this glory of their life:
Such is that ancient burgess, whom in vain
Would gout and fever on his couch detain;
And that large lady, who resolves to come,
Though a first fit has warn'd her of her doom!
These are as oracles: in every cause
They settle doubts, and their decrees are laws;
But all are troubled, when, with dubious look,
Diana questions what Apollo spoke.

Here avarice first, the keen desire of gain,
Rules in each heart, and works in every brain,

Alike the veteran-dames and virgins feel,
Nor care what grey beards or what striplings deal;
Sex, age, and station, vanish from their view,
And gold, their sov'reign good, the mingled crowd pursue.
Hence they are jealous, and as rivals, keep
A watchful eye on the beloved heap;
Meantime discretion bids the tongue be still,
And mild good-humour strives with strong ill-will;
Till prudence fails; when, all impatient grown,
They make their grief, by their suspicions, known.
" Sir, I protest, were Job himself at play,
" He'd rave to see you throw your cards away;
" Not that I care a button — not a pin
" For what I lose; but we had cards to win:
" A saint in heaven would grieve to see such hand
" Cut up by one who will not understand."
" Complain of me! and so you might indeed,
" If I had ventured on that foolish lead,
" That fatal heart — but I forgot your play —
" Some folk have ever thrown their hearts away."
" Yes, and their diamonds; I have heard of one
" Who made a beggar of an only son."
" Better a beggar, than to see him tied
" To art and spite, to insolence and pride."
" Sir, were I you, I'd strive to be polite,
" Against my nature, for a single night."
" So did you strive, and, madam! with success;
" I knew no being we could censure less!" (1)

(1) [Original edition:—
" Against this nature they might show their skill
With small success, who 're maids against their will"]

Is this too much? alas! my peaceful muse
Cannot with half their virulence abuse. (1)
And hark! at other tables discord reigns,
With feign'd contempt for losses and for gains;
Passions awhile are bridled; then they rage,
In waspish youth, and in resentful age; (2)
With scraps of insult—"Sir, when next you play,
"Reflect whose money 't is you throw away.
"No one on earth can less such things regard,
"But when one's partner doesn't know a card ——
"I scorn suspicion, ma'am, but while you stand
"Behind that lady, pray keep down your hand."
"Good heav'n, revoke! remember, if the set
"Be lost, in honour you should pay the debt."
"There, there's your money; but, while I have life,
"I'll never more sit down with man and wife;

(1) ["The common humour of all gamesters is, whilst they win, to be always jovial, merry, good-natured, and free; but, on the contrary, if they lose even the smallest trifle, a single hit at backgammon, or a dealing at cards for twopence a game, they are so choleric and testy, that they frequently break into violent passions, utter the most impious oaths and horrid imprecations, and become so mad that no man dare speak to them. But, alas! they have in general, especially if their stakes be large and excessive, more occasion to regret their winning than losing; for, as Seneca truly observes, their gains are not 'munera fortunæ, sed insidiæ;' not fortune's gifts, but misfortune's baits to lead them on to their common catastrophe, beggary and ruin." — BURTON.]

(2) It is probable, that really polite people, with cultivated minds and harmonious tempers, may judge this description of a Card-club conversation to be highly exaggerated, if not totally fictitious; and I acknowledge that the club must admit a particular kind of members to afford such specimens of acrimony and objurgation: yet that such language is spoken, and such manners exhibited, is most certain, chiefly among those who, being successful in life, without previous education, not very nice in their feelings, or very attentive to improprieties, sit down to game with no other view than that of adding the gain of the evening to the profits of the day; whom, therefore, disappointment itself makes angry, and, when caused by another resentful and vindictive.

" They snap and snarl indeed, but in the heat
" Of all their spleen, their understandings meet;
" They are Freemasons, and have many a sign,
" That we, poor devils! never can divine:
" May it be told, do ye divide th' amount,
" Or goes it all to family account?" (1)

Next is the Club, where to their friends in town
Our country neighbours once a month come down;
We term it *Free-and-Easy*, and yet we
Find it no easy matter to be free:
Ev'n in our small assembly, friends among,
Are minds perverse, there's something will be wrong:
Men are not equal; some will claim a right
To be the kings and heroes of the night;
Will their own favourite themes and notions start,
And you must hear, offend them, or depart.

There comes Sir Thomas from his village-seat,
Happy, he tells us, all his friends to meet;
He brings the ruin'd brother of his wife,
Whom he supports, and makes him sick of life;
A ready witness whom he can produce
Of all his deeds — a butt for his abuse;
Soon as he enters, has the guests espied,
Drawn to the fire, and to the glass applied —

(1) [For an easy vein of ridicule, terse expression, and just strokes of character, this description of a Card Club is admirable. It is one of those likenesses which, without knowing the original, we may pronounce to be perfect. In another tone of verse, but equally happy, is the Club of Smokers. — GIFFORD.]

" Well, what's the subject?—what are you about?
" The news, I take it—come, I 'll help you out;"—
And then, without one answer he bestows
Freely upon us all he hears and knows;
Gives us opinions, tells us how he votes,
Recites the speeches, adds to them his notes,
And gives old ill-told tales for new-born anecdotes:
Yet cares he nothing what we judge or think,
Our only duty 's to attend and drink:
At length, admonish'd by his gout he ends
The various speech, and leaves at peace his friends;
But now, alas! we 've lost the pleasant hour,
And wisdom flies from wine's superior power.

Wine, like the rising sun, possession gains,
And drives the mist of dulness from the brains;
The gloomy vapour from the spirit flies,
And views of gaiety and gladness rise:
Still it proceeds; till from the glowing heat,
The prudent calmly to their shades retreat:—
Then is the mind o'ercast—in wordy rage
And loud contention angry men engage;
Then spleen and pique, like fireworks thrown in spite,
To mischief turn the pleasures of the night;
Anger abuses, Malice loudly rails,
Revenge awakes, and Anarchy prevails:
Till wine, that raised the tempest, makes it cease,
And maudlin Love insists on instant peace;
He, noisy mirth and roaring song commands,
Gives idle toasts, and joins unfriendly hands:
Till fuddled Friendship vows esteem and weeps,
And jovial Folly drinks and sings and sleeps.

A Club there is of *Smokers* — Dare you come
To that close, clouded, hot, narcotic room?
When, midnight past, the very candles seem
Dying for air, and give a ghastly gleam;
When curling fumes in lazy wreaths arise,
And prosing topers rub their winking eyes;
When the long tale, renew'd when last they met,
Is spliced anew, and is unfinish'd yet;
When but a few are left the house to tire,
And they half-sleeping by the sleepy fire;
Ev'n the poor ventilating vane that flew
Of late so fast, is now grown drowsy too;
When sweet, cold, clammy punch its aid bestows,
Then thus the midnight conversation flows: —

"Then, as I said, and — mind me — as I say,
"At our last meeting — you remember" — "Ay?"
"Well, very well — then freely as I drink
"I spoke my thought — you take me — what I think:
"And, sir, said I, if I a freeman be,
"It is my bounden duty to be free."
"Ay, there you posed him: I respect the Chair,
"But man is man, although the man's a mayor;
"If Muggins live — no, no! — if Muggins die,
"He'll quit his office — neighbour, shall I try?"
"I'll speak my mind, for here are none but friends:
"They 're all contending for their private ends;
"No public spirit — once a vote would bring,
"I say a vote — was then a pretty thing;
"It made a man to serve his country and his king:

" But for that place, that Muggins must resign,
" You've my advice — 't is no affair of mine."

The Poor Man has his Club; he comes and spends
His hoarded pittance with his chosen friends;
Nor this alone, — a monthly dole he pays,
To be assisted when his health decays;
Some part his prudence, from the day's supply,
For cares and troubles in his age, lays by;
The printed rules he guards with painted frame,
And shows his children where to read his name:
Those simple words his honest nature move,
That bond of union tied by laws of love;
This is his pride, it gives to his employ
New value, to his home another joy;
While a religious hope its balm applies
For all his fate inflicts, and all his state denies. (1)
Much would it please you, sometimes to explore
The peaceful dwellings of our Borough poor;
To view a sailor just return'd from sea,
His wife beside; a child on either knee,
And others crowding near, that none may lose
The smallest portion of the welcome news;
What dangers pass'd, " when seas ran mountains high,
" When tempests raved, and horrors veil'd the sky;

(1) [The poor man's club, which partakes of the nature of a friendly society, is described with that good-hearted indulgence which marks all Mr. Crabbe's writings. — JEFFREY.]

"When prudence fail'd, when courage grew dismay'd,
"When the strong fainted, and the wicked pray'd,—
" Then in the yawning gulf far down we drove,
" And gazed upon the billowy mount above;
" Till up that mountain, swinging with the gale,
" We view'd the horrors of the watery vale."
The trembling children look with steadfast eyes,
And, panting, sob involuntary sighs:
Soft sleep awhile his torpid touch delays,
And all is joy and piety and praise.

Masons are ours, *Freemasons*—but, alas!
To their own bards I leave the mystic class;
In vain shall one, and not a gifted man,
Attempt to sing of this enlighten'd clan:
I know no Word, boast no directing Sign,
And not one Token of the race is mine;
Whether with Hiram, that wise widow's son,
They came from Tyre to royal Solomon,
Two pillars raising by their skill profound,
Boaz and Jachin through the East renown'd:
Whether the sacred Books their rise express,
Or books profane, 't is vain for me to guess:
It may be, lost in date remote and high,
They know not what their own antiquity:
It may be, too, derived from cause so low,
They have no wish their origin to show:
If, as Crusaders, they combined to wrest
From heathen lords the land they long possess'd;

Or were at first some harmless club, who made
Their idle meetings solemn by parade;
Is but conjecture—for the task unfit,
Awe-struck and mute, the puzzling theme I quit:
Yet, if such blessings from their Order flow,
We should be glad their moral code to know;
Trowels of silver are but simple things,
And Aprons worthless as their apron-strings;
But if indeed you have the skill to teach
A social spirit, now beyond our reach;
If man's warm passions you can guide and bind,
And plant the virtues in the wayward mind;
If you can wake to Christian love the heart,—
In mercy, something of your powers impart.
But, as it seems, we Masons must become
To know the Secret, and must then be dumb;
And as we venture for uncertain gains,
Perhaps the profit is not worth the pains.
When Bruce, that dauntless traveller, thought he stood
On Nile's first rise, the fountain of the flood,
And drank exulting in the sacred spring,
The critics told him it was no such thing;
That springs unnumber'd round the country ran,
But none could show him where the first began:
So might we feel, should we our time bestow,
To gain these Secrets and these Signs to know;
Might question still if all the truth we found,
And firmly stood upon the certain ground;
We might our title to the Mystery dread,
And fear we drank not at the river-head.

Griggs and *Gregorians* here their meeting hold,
Convivial Sects, and *Bucks* alert and bold;
A kind of Masons, but without their sign;
The bonds of union — pleasure, song, and wine.
Man, a gregarious creature, loves to fly
Where he the trackings of the herd can spy;
Still to be one with many he desires,
Although it leads him through the thorns and briers.

A few! but few there are, who in the mind
Perpetual source of consolation find;
The weaker many to the world will come,
For comforts seldom to be found from home.

When the faint hands no more a brimmer hold,
When flannel-wreaths the useless limbs infold,
The breath impeded, and the bosom cold;
When half the pillow'd man the palsy chains,
And the blood falters in the bloated veins, —
Then, as our friends no further aid supply
Than hope's cold phrase and courtesy's soft sigh,
We should that comfort for ourselves ensure,
Which friends could not, if we could friends, procure

Early in life, when we can laugh aloud,
There 's something pleasant in a social crowd,
Who laugh with us — but will such joy remain,
When we lie struggling on the bed of pain?
When our physician tells us with a sigh,
No more on hope and science to rely,
Life's staff is useless then; with labouring breath
We pray for Hope divine — the staff of Death; —
This is a scene which few companions grace,
And where the heart's first favourites yield their place.

Here all the aid of man to man must end,
Here mounts the soul to her eternal Friend;
The tenderest love must here its tie resign,
And give th' aspiring heart to love divine.

Men feel their weakness, and to numbers run,
Themselves to strengthen, or themselves to shun;
But though to this our weakness may be prone,
Let 's learn to live, for we must die, alone.



THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XI.

INNS.

A difficult Subject for Poetry — Invocation of the Muse — Description of the principal Inn and those of the first Class — The large deserted Tavern — Those of a second Order — Their Company — One of particular Description — A lower Kind of Public-Houses: yet distinguished among themselves — Houses on the Quays for Sailors — The Green-Man: its Landlord, and the Adventure of his Marriage, &c.

All the comforts of life in a Tavern are known,
'Tis his home who possesses not one of his own;
And to him who has rather too much of that one,
'Tis the house of a friend where he 's welcome to run:
The instant you enter my door you 're my Lord,
With whose taste and whose pleasure I 'm proud to accord;
And the louder you call, and the longer you stay,
The more I am happy to serve and obey.

To the house of a friend if you 're pleased to retire,
You must all things admit, you must all things admire;
You must pay with observance the price of your treat,
You must eat what is praised, and must praise what you eat:
But here you may come, and no tax we require,
You may loudly condemn what you greatly admire;
You may growl at our wishes and pains to excel,
And may snarl at the rascals who please you so well.

At your wish we attend, and confess that your speech
On the nation's affairs might the minister teach;
His views you may blame, and his measures oppose,
There 's no Tavern-treason — you 're under the Rose:
Should rebellions arise in your own little state,
With me you may safely their consequence wait;
To recruit your lost spirits 'tis prudent to come,
And to fly to a friend when the devil's at home.

That I 've faults is confess'd; but it won't be denied,
'Tis my interest the faults of my neighbours to hide;
If I 've sometimes lent Scandal occasion to prate,
I 've often conceal'd what she 'd love to relate;
If to Justice's bar some have wander'd from mine,
'Twas because the dull rogues wouldn't stay by their wine;
And for brawls at my house, well the poet explains,
That men drink *shallow draughts*, and so madden their brains.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XI.

INNS.

MUCH do I need, and therefore will I ask,
A Muse to aid me in my present task;
For then with special cause we beg for aid,
When of our subject we are most afraid:
INNS are this subject—'t is an ill-drawn lot,
So, thou who gravely triflest, fail me not;
Fail not, but haste, and to my memory bring
Scenes yet unsung, which few would choose to sing:
Thou mad'st a Shilling splendid (1); thou hast thrown
On humble themes the graces all thine own;
By thee the Mistress of a Village-school
Became a queen enthroned upon her stool; (2)

(1) —— "Sing, heavenly Muse!
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,
A shilling, breeches and chimeras dire."
PHILIPS's *Splendid Shilling.*

"Lend me thy clarion, Goddess! let me try
To sound the praise of merit ere it dies,
Such as I oft have chaunced to espy
Lost in the dreary shades of dull obscurity."
SHENSTONE's *Schoolmistress.*

And far beyond the rest thou gav'st to shine
Belinda's Lock—that deathless work was thine. (1)
Come, lend thy cheerful light, and give to please,
These seats of revelry, these scenes of ease;
Who sings of Inns much danger has to dread,
And needs assistance from the fountain-head.
High in the street, o'erlooking all the place,
The rampant *Lion* shows his kingly face;
His ample jaws extend from side to side,
His eyes are glaring, and his nostrils wide;
In silver shag the sovereign form is dress'd,
A mane horrific sweeps his ample chest;
Elate with pride, he seems t' assert his reign,
And stands the glory of his wide domain.
Yet nothing dreadful to his friends the sight,
But sign and pledge of welcome and delight
To him the noblest guest the town detains
Flies for repast, and in his court remains;
Him too the crowd with longing looks admire,
Sigh for his joys, and modestly retire;
Here not a comfort shall to them be lost
Who never ask or never feel the cost.
The ample yards on either side contain
Buildings where order and distinction reign;—
The splendid carriage of the wealthier guest,
The ready chaise and driver smartly dress'd;
Whiskeys and gigs and curricles are there,
And high-fed prancers many a raw-boned pair.

(1) "This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name."
POPE's *Rape of the Lock*.

On all without a lordly host sustains
The care of empire, and observant reigns;
The parting guest beholds him at his side,
With pomp obsequious, bending in his pride;
Round all the place his eyes all objects meet,
Attentive, silent, civil, and discreet.
O'er all within the lady-hostess rules,
Her bar she governs, and her kitchen schools;
To every guest th' appropriate speech is made,
And every duty with distinction paid;
Respectful, easy, pleasant, or polite—
"Your nonour's servant"—"Mister Smith, good night." (1)
Next, but not near, yet honour'd through the town,
There swing, incongruous pair! the Bear and Crown;
That Crown suspended gems and ribands deck,
A golden chain hangs o'er that furry neck:
Unlike the nobler beast, the Bear is bound,
And with the Crown so near him, scowls uncrown'd;
Less his dominion, but alert are all
Without, within, and ready for the call;
Smart lads and light run nimbly here and there,
Nor for neglected duties mourns the Bear.
To his retreats, on the Election-day,
The losing party found their silent way;
There they partook of each consoling good,
Like him uncrown'd, like him in sullen mood—

(1) [The White Lion is one of the principal inns at Aldborough. The landlord shows, with no little exultation, an old-fashioned parlour, the usual scene of convivial meetings, in which the poet had his share. See Vol. I. p. 107.]

Threat'ning, but bound.—Here meet a social kind,
Our various clubs for various cause combined;
Nor has he pride, but thankful takes as gain
The dew-drops shaken from the Lion's mane:
A thriving couple here their skill display,
And share the profits of no vulgar sway.

Third in our Borough's list appears the sign
Of a fair queen—the gracious Caroline;
But in decay—each feature in the face
Has stain of Time, and token of disgrace.
The storm of winter, and the summer-sun,
Have on that form their equal mischief done;
The features now are all disfigured seen,
And not one charm adorns th' insulted queen: (1)
To this poor face was never paint applied,
Th' unseemly work of cruel Time to hide;
Here we may rightly such neglect upbraid,
Paint on such faces is by prudence laid.
Large the domain, but all within combine
To correspond with the dishonour'd sign;
And all around dilapidates; you call—
But none replies—they 're inattentive all:
At length a ruin'd stable holds your steed,
While you through large and dirty rooms proceed,
Spacious and cold; a proof they once had been
In honour,—now magnificently mean;
Till in some small half-furnish'd room you rest,
Whose dying fire denotes it had a guest

(1) [Original edition:—
Have, like the guillotine, the royal neck
Parted in twain—the figure is a wreck.]

In those you pass'd where former splendour reign'd,
You saw the carpets torn, the paper stain'd;
Squares of discordant glass in windows fix'd,
And paper oil'd in many a space betwixt;
A soil'd and broken sconce, a mirror crack'd
With table underprop'd, and chairs new back'd;
A marble side-slab with ten thousand stains,
And all an ancient Tavern's poor remains.

With much entreaty, they your food prepare,
And acid wine afford, with meagre fare;
Heartless you sup; and when a dozen times
You've read the fractured window's senseless rhymes;
Have been assured that Phœbe Green was fair
And Peter Jackson took his supper there;
You reach a chilling chamber, where you dread
Damps, hot or cold, from a tremendous bed;
Late comes your sleep, and you are waken'd soon
By rustling tatters of the old festoon.

O'er this large building, thus by time defaced,
A servile couple has its owner placed,
Who not unmindful that its style is large,
To lost magnificence adapt their charge:
Thus an old beauty, who has long declined,
Keeps former dues and dignity in mind;
And wills that all attention should be paid
For graces vanish'd and for charms decay'd.

Few years have pass'd, since brightly 'cross the way,
Lights from each window shot the lengthen'd ray,
And busy looks in every face were seen,
Through the warm precincts of the reigning Queen:
There fires inviting blazed, and all around
Was heard the tinkling bells' seducing sound;

The nimble waiters to that sound from far
Sprang to the call, then hasten'd to the bar;
Where a glad priestess of the temple sway'd,
The most obedient, and the most obey'd;
Rosy and round, adorn'd in crimson vest,
And flaming ribands at her ample breast:
She, skill'd like Circe, tried her guests to move,
With looks of welcome and with words of love;
And such her potent charms, that men unwise
Were soon transform'd and fitted for the sties.

Her port in bottles stood, a well-stain'd row,
Drawn for the evening from the pipe below;
Three powerful spirits fill'd a parted case,
Some cordial bottles stood in secret place;
Fair acid-fruits in nets above were seen,
Her plate was splendid, and her glasses clean;
Basins and bowls were ready on the stand,
And measures clatter'd in her powerful hand.

Inferior Houses now our notice claim,
But who shall deal them their appropriate fame?
Who shall the nice, yet known distinction, tell,
Between the peal complete and single Bell?

Determine ye, who on your shining nags
Wear oil-skin beavers, and bear seal-skin bags;
Or ye, grave topers, who with coy delight
Snugly enjoy the sweetness of the night;
Ye Travellers all, superior Inns denied
By moderate purse, the low by decent pride;
Come and determine,—will ye take your place
At the *full* Orb, or *half* the lunar Face?
With the Black-Boy or Angel will ye dine?
Will ye approve the Fountain or the Vine?

Horses the *white* or *black* will ye prefer?
The Silver-Swan or Swan opposed to her—
Rare bird (1)! whose form the raven-plumage decks
And graceful curve her three alluring necks?
All these a decent entertainment give,
And by their comforts comfortably live.

Shall I pass by the Boar?—there are who cry,
"Beware the Boar," and pass determined by:
Those dreadful tusks, those little peering eyes
And churning chaps, are tokens to the wise.
There dwells a kind old Aunt, and there you see
Some kind young Nieces in her company;
Poor village nieces, whom the tender dame
Invites to town, and gives their beauty Fame;
The grateful sisters feel th' important aid,
And the good Aunt is flatter'd and repaid.

What, though it may some cool observers strike,
That such fair sisters should be so unlike;
That still another and another comes,
And at the matron's tables smiles and blooms;
That all appear as if they meant to stay
Time undefined, nor name a parting day;
And yet, though all are valued, all are dear,
Causeless, they go, and seldom more appear.

Yet let Suspicion hide her odious head,
And Scandal vengeance from a burgess dread:
A pious friend, who with the ancient dame
At sober cribbage takes an evening game;
His cup beside him, through their play he quaffs,
And oft renews, and innocently laughs;

(1) "Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno."—Juv.

Or, growing serious, to the text resorts,
And from the Sunday-sermon makes reports;
While all, with grateful glee, his wish attend,
A grave protector and a powerful friend:
But Slander says, who indistinctly sees,
Once he was caught with Sylvia on his knees;—
A cautious burgess with a careful wife
To be so caught!—'tis false upon my life.

Next are a lower kind, yet not so low
But they, among them, their distinctions know;
And when a thriving landlord aims so high,
As to exchange the Chequer for the Pye,
Or from Duke William to the Dog repairs,
He takes a finer coat and fiercer airs.

Pleased with his power, the poor man loves to say
What favourite Inn shall share his evening's pay;
Where he shall sit the social hour, and lose
His past day's labours and his next day's views.
Our Seamen too have choice: one takes a trip
In the warm cabin of his favourite Ship;
And on the morrow in the humbler Boat
He rows till fancy feels herself afloat;
Can he the sign—Three Jolly Sailors—pass,
Who hears a fiddle and who sees a lass?
The Anchor too affords the seaman joys,
In small smoked room, all clamour, crowd, and noise;
Where a curved settle half surrounds the fire,
Where fifty voices purl and punch require;
They come for pleasure in their leisure hour,
And they enjoy it to their utmost power;
Standing they drink, they swearing smoke, while all
Call or make ready for a second call:

There is no time for trifling—"Do ye see?
"We drink and drub the French extempore."
See! round the room, on every beam and balk,
Are mingled scrolls of hieroglyphic chalk;
Yet nothing heeded—would one stroke suffice
To blot out all, here honour is too nice,—
"Let knavish landsmen think such dirty things,
"We're British tars, and British tars are kings."
But the Green-Man shall I pass by unsung,
Which mine own *James* upon his sign-post hung?
His sign, his image,—for he was once seen
A squire's attendant, clad in keeper's green;
Ere yet with wages more, and honour less,
He stood behind me in a graver dress.
James in an evil hour went forth to woo
Young *Juliet Hart*, and was her Romeo:
They'd seen the play, and thought it vastly sweet
For two young lovers by the moon to meet;
The nymph was gentle, of her favours free,
Ev'n at a word—no Rosalind was she;
Nor, like that other Juliet, tried his truth
With—"Be thy purpose marriage, gentle youth?"
But him received, and heard his tender tale
When sang the lark, and when the nightingale:
So in few months the generous lass was seen
I' the way that all the Capulets had been.
Then first repentance seized the amorous man,
And—shame on love!—he reason'd and he ran;
The thoughtful Romeo trembled for his purse,
And the sad sounds, "for better and for worse."
Yet could the Lover not so far withdraw,
But he was haunted both by Love and Law;

Now Law dismay'd him as he view'd its fangs,
Now Pity seized him for his Juliet's pangs;
Then thoughts of justice and some dread of jail,
Where all would blame him, and where none might bail;
These drew him back, till Juliet's hut appear'd,
Where love had drawn him when he should have fear'd.

There sat the father in his wicker throne,
Uttering his curses in tremendous tone;
With foulest names his daughter he reviled,
And look'd a very Herod at the child:
Nor was she patient, but with equal scorn,
Bade him remember when his Joe was born:
Then rose the mother, eager to begin
Her plea for frailty, when the swain came in.

To him she turn'd, and other theme began,
Show'd him his boy, and bade him be a man;
"An honest man, who, when he breaks the laws,
"Will make a woman honest if there's cause."
With lengthen'd speech she proved what came to pass
Was no reflection on a loving lass:
"If she your love as wife and mother claim,
"What can it matter which was first the name?
"But 'tis most base, 'tis perjury and theft,
"When a lost girl is like a widow left;
"The rogue who ruins—" here the father found
His spouse was treading on forbidden ground.

"That's not the point," quoth he,—"I don't suppose
"My good friend Fletcher to be one of those;

" What's done amiss he'll mend in proper time—
" I hate to hear of villany and crime:
" 'Twas my misfortune, in the days of youth,
" To find two lasses pleading for my truth;
" The case was hard, I would with all my soul
" Have wedded both, but law is our control;
" So one I took, and when we gain'd a home,
" Her friend agreed—what could she more?—to come;
" And when she found that I'd a widow'd bed,
" Me she desired—what could I less?—to wed.
" An easier case is yours: you've not the smart
" That two fond pleaders cause in one man's heart;
" You've not to wait from year to year distress'd,
" Before your conscience can be laid at rest;
" There smiles your bride, there sprawls your new-born son,
" —A ring, a licence, and the thing is done."
" My loving James,"—the Lass began her plea,
" I'll make thy reason take a part with me:
" Had I been froward, skittish, or unkind,
" Or to thy person or thy passion blind;
" Had I refused, when 'twas thy part to pray,
" Or put thee off with promise and delay;
" Thou might'st in justice and in conscience fly.
" Denying her who taught thee to deny;
" But, James, with me thou hadst an easier task,
" Bonds and conditions I forbore to ask;
" I laid no traps for thee, no plots or plans,
" Nor marriage named by licence or by banns;
" Nor would I now the parson's aid employ,
" But for this cause,"—and up she held her boy.

Motives like these could heart of flesh resist?
James took the infant and in triumph kiss'd;
Then to his mother's arms the child restored,
Made his proud speech and pledged his worthy word.
" Three times at church our banns shall publish'd be,
" Thy health be drunk in bumpers three times three;
" And thou shalt grace (bedeck'd in garments gay)
" The christening-dinner on the wedding day."
James at my door then made his parting bow,
Took the Green-Man, and is a master now. (1)

(1) If this Letter should be found to contain nothing interesting or uncommon; if it describe things which we behold every day, and some which we do not wish to behold at any time; let it be considered that it is one of the shortest, and that, from a poem whose subject was a Borough, populous and wealthy, these places of public accommodation could not, without some impropriety, be excluded.

THE BOROUGH

LETTER XII.

PLAYERS.

These are monarchs none respect,
  Heroes, yet an humbled crew,
Nobles, whom the crowd correct,
  Wealthy men, whom duns pursue;
Beauties, shrinking from the view
  Of the day's detecting eye;
Lovers, who with much ado
  Long-forsaken damsels woo,
And heave the ill-feign'd sigh.

These are misers, craving means
  Of existence through the day,
Famous scholars, conning scenes
  Of a dull bewildering play;
Ragged beaux and misses grey
  Whom the rabble praise and blame:
Proud and mean, and sad and gay,
Toiling after ease, are they,
  Infamous*, and boasting fame.

* Strolling players are thus held in a legal sense.

They arrive in the Borough — Welcomed by their former Friends — Are better fitted for Comic than Tragic Scenes: yet better approved in the latter by one Part of their Audience —Their general Character and Pleasantry — Particular Distresses and Labours — Their Fortitude and Patience — A private Rehearsal — The Vanity of the aged Actress — A Heroine from the Milliner's Shop — A deluded Tradesman — Of what Persons the Company is composed — Character and Adventures of Frederic Thompson.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XII.

PLAYERS.

DRAWN by the annual call, we now behold
Our Troop Dramatic, heroes known of old,
And those, since last they march'd, enlisted and enroll'd:
Mounted on hacks or borne in waggons some,
The rest on foot (the humbler brethren) come. (1)
Three favour'd places, an unequal time,
Join to support this company sublime:
Ours for the longer period—see how light

(1) "The strolling tribe, a despicable race!
Like wand'ring Arabs, shift from place to place:
Vagrants by law, to justice open laid,
They tremble, of the beadle's lash afraid,
And, fawning, cringe for wretched means of life
To Madam Mayoress, or his Worship's wife.
The mighty monarch, in theatric sack,
Carries his whole regalia at his back;
His royal consort heads the female band,
And leads the heir apparent in her hand;
The pannier'd ass creeps on with conscious pride,
Bearing a future prince on either side." — CHURCHILL.

Yon parties move, their former friends in sight,
Whose claims are all allow'd, and friendship glads
the night.
Now public rooms shall sound with words divine,
And private lodgings hear how heroes shine;
No talk of pay shall yet on pleasure steal,
But kindest welcome bless the friendly meal;
While o'er the social jug and decent cheer,
Shall be described the fortunes of the year.
Peruse these bills, and see what each can do,—
Behold! the prince, the slave, the monk, the Jew;
Change but the garment, and they 'll all engage
To take each part, and act in every age:
Cull'd from all houses, what a house are they!
Swept from all barns, our Borough-critics say;
But with some portion of a critic's ire,
We all endure them; there are some admire:
They might have praise, confined to farce alone;
Full well they grin, they should not try to groan:
But then our servants' and our seamen's wives
Love all that rant and rapture as their lives;
He who 'Squire Richard's part could well sustain, (1)
Finds as King Richard he must roar amain—
"My horse! my horse!"—Lo! now to their
abodes, (2)
Come lords and lovers, empresses and gods.

(1) [In Vanbrugh's comedy of the Provoked Husband.]

(2) ["It is true, indeed, that the principal actors on our rustic boards have most of them had their education in Covent Garden or Drury Lane; but they have been employed in the business of the drama in a degree but just above a scene-shifter. The attendants on a monarch, strut monarchs themselves, mutes find their voices, and message-bearers rise into heroes. The humour of our best comedian consists in shrugs and grimaces, he

The master-mover of these scenes has made
No trifling gain in this adventurous trade;
Trade we may term it, for he duly buys
Arms out of use and undirected eyes:
These he instructs, and guides them as he can,
And vends each night the manufactured man:
Long as our custom lasts they gladly stay,
Then strike their tents, like Tartars! and away!
The place grows bare where they too long remain,
But grass will rise ere they return again.

Children of Thespis, welcome! knights and queens!
Counts! barons! beauties! when before your scenes,
And mighty monarchs thund'ring from your throne;
Then step behind, and all your glory 's gone:
Of crown and palace, throne and guards bereft,
The pomp is vanish'd, and the care is left. (1)
Yet strong and lively is the joy they feel,
When the full house secures the plenteous meal;
Flatt'ring and flatter'd, each attempts to raise
A brother's merits for a brother's praise:
For never hero shows a prouder heart,
Than he who proudly acts a hero's part;

---

jokes in a wry mouth, and repartees in a grin; in short, he practises on Congreve and Vanbrugh all those distortions, that gained him so much applause from the galleries, in the drubs which he was condemned to undergo in pantomimes." — THORNHILL.]

(1) "In shabby state they strut, in tatter'd robe,
The scene a blanket, and a barn the globe:
No high conceits their moderate wishes raise,
Content with humble profit, humble praise.
Let dowdies simper, and let bumkins stare,
The strolling pageant hero treads on air:
Pleased for his hour he to mankind gives law,
And snores the next out on a bed of straw." — CHURCHILL.

Nor without cause; the boards, we know, can yield
Place for fierce contest, like the tented field.
Graceful to tread the stage, to be in turn
The prince we honour, and the knave we spurn;
Bravely to bear the tumult of the crowd,
The hiss tremendous, and the censure loud:
These are their parts,—and he who these sustains,
Deserves some praise and profit for his pains.
Heroes at least of gentler kind are they,
Against whose swords no weeping widows pray,
No blood their fury sheds, nor havoc marks their way.
Sad happy race! soon raised and soon depress'd,
Your days all pass'd in jeopardy and jest;
Poor without prudence, with afflictions vain,
Not warn'd by misery, not enrich'd by gain;
Whom Justice, pitying, chides from place to place,
A wandering, careless, wretched, merry race,
Whose cheerful looks assume, and play the parts
Of happy rovers with repining hearts;(1)
Then cast off care, and in the mimic pain,
Of tragic wo, feel spirits light and vain,
Distress and hope—the mind's, the body's wear,
The man's affliction, and the actor's tear:
Alternate times of fasting and excess
Are yours, ye smiling children of distress.
Slaves though ye be, your wandering freedom seems,
And with your varying views and restless schemes,
Your griefs are transient, as your joys are dreams.

(1) "He who to-night is seated on a throne,
Calls subjects, empires, kingdoms, all his own,
Who wears the diadem and regal robe,
Next morning shall awake as poor as Job."

Yet keen those griefs—ah! what avail thy charms,
Fair Juliet! what that infant in thine arms;
What those heroic lines thy patience learns,
What all the aid thy present Romeo earns,
Whilst thou art crowded in that lumbering wain,
With all thy plaintive sisters to complain?

Nor is there lack of labour—To rehearse,
Day after day, poor scraps of prose and verse;
To bear each other's spirit, pride, and spite;
To hide in rant the heart-ache of the night;
To dress in gaudy patchwork, and to force
The mind to think on the appointed course;—
This is laborious, and may be defined
The bootless labour of the thriftless mind.

There is a veteran Dame: I see her stand
Intent and pensive with her book in hand;
Awhile her thoughts she forces on her part,
Then dwells on objects nearer to the heart;
Across the room she paces, gets her tone,
And fits her features for the Danish throne;
To-night a queen—I mark her motion slow,
I hear her speech, and Hamlet's mother know.

Methinks 't is pitiful to see her try
For strength of arms and energy of eye;
With vigour lost, and spirits worn away,
Her pomp and pride she labours to display;
And when awhile she 's tried her part to act,
To find her thoughts arrested by some fact;
When struggles more and more severe are seen,
In the plain actress than the Danish queen,—
At length she feels her part, she finds delight,
And fancies all the plaudits of the night:

Old as she is, she smiles at every speech,
And thinks no youthful part beyond her reach;
But as the mist of vanity again
Is blown away, by press of present pain,
Sad and in doubt she to her purse applies
For cause of comfort, where no comfort lies;
Then to her task she sighing turns again—
"Oh! Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain!" (1)

And who that poor, consumptive, wither'd thing,
Who strains her slender throat and strives to sing?
Panting for breath, and forced her voice to drop,
And far unlike the inmate of the shop,
Where she, in youth and health, alert and gay,
Laugh'd off at night the labours of the day;
With novels, verses, fancy's fertile powers,
And sister-converse pass'd the evening-hours,
But Cynthia's soul was soft, her wishes strong,
Her judgment weak, and her conclusions wrong
The morning-call and counter were her dread,
And her contempt the needle and the thread:
But when she read a gentle damsel's part,
Her wo, her wish!—she had them all by heart.

At length the hero of the boards drew nigh,
Who spake of love till sigh re-echo'd sigh;
He told in honey'd words his deathless flame,
And she his own by tender vows became;
Nor ring nor licence needed souls so fond,
Alfonso's passion was his Cynthia's bond:

(1 [This was written, in 1799, soon after Mr. Crabbe had seen a rehearsal at the "Theatre Royal," Aldborough. The "veteran dame" was the lady manager, who, seated in her chair of state, corrected the rest, as far as her evidently abstracted attention would allow. Her husband enacted Othello, and shouted lustily for the "*hankercher.*"]

And thus the simple girl, to shame betray'd,
Sinks to the grave forsaken and dismay'd;
Sick without pity, sorrowing without hope,
See her! the grief and scandal of the troop:
A wretched martyr to a childish pride,
Her wo insulted, and her praise denied:
Her humble talents, though derided, used,
Her prospects lost, her confidence abused;
All that remains—for she not long can brave
Increase of evils—is an early grave.

Ye gentle Cynthias of the shop, take heed
What dreams ye cherish, and what books ye read!

A decent sum had *Peter Nottage* made,
By joining bricks—to him a thriving trade:
Of his employment master and his wife,
This humble tradesman led a lordly life;
The house of kings and heroes lack'd repairs,
And Peter, though reluctant, served the Players:
Connected thus, he heard in way polite,—
"Come, Master Nottage, see us play to-night."
At first 't was folly, nonsense, idle stuff,
But seen for nothing it grew well enough;
And better now—now best, and every night,
In this fool's paradise he drank delight;
And as he felt the bliss, he wish'd to know
Whence all this rapture and these joys could flow;
For if the seeing could such pleasure bring,
What must the feeling?—*feeling like a king?*

In vain his wife, *his uncle, and his friend,*
Cried—"Peter! Peter! *let such follies end;*
"'T is well enough *these vagabonds to see,*
"But would you partner with a showman be?"

"Showman!" said Peter, "did not Quin and Clive,
"And Roscius-Garrick, by the science thrive?
"Showman!—'t is scandal; I 'm by genius led
"To join a class who 've Shakspeare at their head."
Poor Peter thus by easy steps became
A dreaming candidate for scenic fame,
And, after years consumed, infirm and poor,
He sits and takes the tickets at the door.

Of various men these marching troops are made,—
Pen-spurning clerks, and lads contemning trade;
Waiters and servants by confinement teased,
And youths of wealth by dissipation eased;
With feeling nymphs, who, such resource at hand,
Scorn to obey the rigour of command;
Some, who from higher views by vice are won,
And some of either sex by love undone;
The greater part lamenting as their fall,
What some an honour and advancement call. (1)

There are who names in shame or fear assume,
And hence our Bevilles and our Savilles come;

(1) [The history of the stage might afford many instances of those, who, in the trade of death, might have slain men, yet have condescended to deal counterfeit slaughter from their right hands, and administer harmless bowls of poison. We might read also of persons, whose fists were intended to beat 'the drum ecclesiastic,' who have themselves become theatrical volunteers. In regard to the law, many who were originally designed to manifest their talents for elocution in Westminster Hall, have displayed them in Drury Lane; and it may be added, on theatrical authority, that—

'Not e'en Attorneys have this rage withstood,
But changed their pens for truncheons, ink for blood,
And, strange reverse!—died for their country's good.'—

THORNHILL.]

It honours him, from tailor's board kick'd down,
As Mister Dormer to amuse the town;
Falling, he rises: but a kind there are
Who dwell on former prospects, and despair;
Justly but vainly they their fate deplore,
And mourn their fall who fell to rise no more.

Our merchant *Thompson*, with his sons around,
Most mind and talent in his *Frederick* found:
He was so lively, that his mother knew,
If he were taught, that honour must ensue;
The father's views were in a different line,—
But if at college he were sure to shine,
Then should he go—to prosper who could doubt?—
When schoolboy stigmas would be all wash'd out,
For there were marks upon his youthful face,
'Twixt vice and error—a neglected case—
These would submit to skill; a little time,
And none could trace the error or the crime;
Then let him go, and once at college, he
Might choose his station—what would Frederick be?

'Twas soon determined—He could not descend
To pedant-laws and lectures without end;
And then the chapel—night and morn to pray,
Or mulct and threaten'd if he kept away;
No! not to be a bishop—so he swore,
And at his college he was seen no more.

His debts all paid, the father, with a sigh,
Placed him in office—"Do, my Frederick, try:
"Confine thyself a few short months, and then—"
He tried a fortnight, and threw down the pen.

Again demands were hush'd: "My son, you're free,
"But you're unsettled; take your chance at sea:"
So in few days the midshipman, equipp'd,
Received the mother's blessing, and was shipp'd.
Hard was her fortune! soon compell'd to meet
The wretched stripling staggering through the street;
For, rash, impetuous, insolent and vain,
The captain sent him to his friends again:
About the Borough roved th' unhappy boy,
And ate the bread of every chance-employ!
Of friends he borrow'd, and the parents yet
In secret fondness authorised the debt;
The younger sister, still a child, was taught
To give with feign'd affright the pittance sought;
For now the father cried — "It is too late
"For trial more — I leave him to his fate," —
Yet left him not; and with a kind of joy,
The mother heard of her desponding boy;
At length he sicken'd, and he found, when sick,
All aid was ready, all attendance quick;
A fever seized him, and at once was lost
The thought of trespass, error, crime and cost:
Th' indulgent parents knelt beside the youth,
They heard his promise and believed his truth;
And when the danger lessen'd on their view,
They cast off doubt, and hope assurance grew; —
Nursed by his sisters, cherish'd by his sire,
Begg'd to be glad, encouraged to aspire,
His life, they said, would now all care repay,
And he might date his prospects from that day;

A son, a brother to his home received,
They hoped for all things, and in all believed.
And now will pardon, comfort, kindness draw
The youth from vice? will honour, duty, law?
Alas! not all: the more the trials lent,
The less he seem'd to ponder and repent;
Headstrong, determined in his own career,
He thought reproof unjust and truth severe;
The soul's disease was to its crisis come,
He first abused and then abjured his home;
And when he chose a vagabond to be,
He made his shame his glory — "I'll be free." (1)
Friends, parents, relatives, hope, reason, love,
With anxious ardour for that empire strove;
In vain their strife, in vain the means applied,
They had no comfort, but that all were tried;
One strong vain trial made, the mind to move,
Was the last effort of parental love.
Ev'n then he watch'd his father from his home,
And to his mother would for pity come,
Where, as he made her tender terrors rise,
He talk'd of death, and threaten'd for supplies.
Against a youth so vicious and undone,
All hearts were closed, and every door but one:
The Players received him; they with open heart
Gave him his portion and assign'd his part;

(1) [Original edition:—

Vice, dreadful habit! when assumed so long,
Becomes at length inveterately strong;
As, more indulged, it gains the strength we lose,
Maintains its conquests and extends its views;
Till, the whole soul submitting to its chains,
It takes possession, and for ever reigns.]

And ere three days were added to his life,
He found a home, a duty, and a wife.
His present friends, though they were nothing nice,
Nor ask'd how vicious he, or what his vice,
Still they expected he should now attend
To the joint duty as a useful friend;
The leader too declared, with frown severe,
That none should pawn a robe that kings might wear,
And much it moved him, when he Hamlet play'd
To see his Father's Ghost so drunken made:
Then too the temper, the unbending pride
Of this ally, would no reproof abide: —
So leaving these, he march'd away and join'd
Another troop, and other goods purloin'd;
And other characters, both gay and sage,
Sober and sad, made stagger on the stage;
Then to rebuke with arrogant disdain,
He gave abuse and sought a home again.
Thus changing scenes, but with unchanging vice,
Engaged by many, but with no one twice:
Of this, a last and poor resource, bereft,
He to himself, unhappy guide! was left —
And who shall say where guided? to what seats
Of starving villany? of thieves and cheats?
In that sad time of many a dismal scene
Had he a witness, not inactive, been;
Had leagued with petty pilferers, and had crept
Where of each sex degraded numbers slept:
With such associates he was long allied,
Where his capacity for ill was tried,
And that once lost, the wretch was cast aside

For now, though willing with the worst to act,
He wanted powers for an important fact;
And while he felt as lawless spirits feel,
His hand was palsied, and he couldn't steal.
By these rejected, is their lot so strange,
So low! that he could suffer by the change?
Yes! the new station as a fall we judge, —
He now became the harlots' humble drudge,
Their drudge in common: they combined to save
Awhile from starving their submissive slave;
For now his spirit left him, and his pride,
His scorn, his rancour, and resentment died;
Few were his feelings — but the keenest these,
The rage of hunger, and the sigh for ease;
He who abused indulgence, now became
By want subservient, and by misery tame;
A slave, he begg'd forbearance; bent with pain,
He shunn'd the blow, — "Ah! strike me not again."
Thus was he found: the master of a hoy
Saw the sad wretch whom he had known a boy;
At first in doubt, but Frederick laid aside
All shame, and humbly for his aid applied:
He, tamed and smitten with the storms gone by,
Look'd for compassion through one living eye,
And stretch'd th' unpalsied hand: the seaman felt
His honest heart with gentle pity melt,
And his small boon with cheerful frankness dealt;
Then made enquiries of th' unhappy youth,
Who told, nor shame forbade him, all the truth.
"Young Frederick Thompson, to a chandler's shop
By harlots order'd and afraid to stop! —

" What! our good merchants favourite to be seen
" In state so loathsome and in dress so mean?"—
So thought the seaman as he bade adieu,
And, when in port, related all he knew.
But time was lost, enquiry came too late,
Those whom he served knew nothing of his fate;
No! they had seized on what the sailor gave,
Nor bore resistance from their abject slave
The spoil obtain'd, they cast him from the door,
Robb'd, beaten, hungry, pain'd, diseased, and poor
Then nature, pointing to the only spot
Which still had comfort for so dire a lot,
Although so feeble, led him on the way,
And hope look'd forward to a happier day:
He thought, poor prodigal! a father yet
His woes would pity and his crimes forget;
Nor had he brother who with speech severe
Would check the pity or refrain the tear:
A lighter spirit in his bosom rose,
As near the road he sought an hour's repose.
And there he found it: he had left the town,
But buildings yet were scatter'd up and down;
To one of these, half-ruin'd and half-built,
Was traced this child of wretchedness and guilt;
There, on the remnant of a beggar's vest,
Thrown by in scorn, the sufferer sought for rest;
There was this scene of vice and wo to close,
And there the wretched body found repose. (1)

(1) The Letter on Itinerant Players will to some appear too harshly written, their profligacy exaggerated, and their distresses magnified; but though the respectability of a part of these people may give us a more favourable view of the whole body; though some actors be sober, and some

managers prudent; still there is vice and misery left, more than sufficient to justify my description. But, if I could find only one woman who (passing forty years on many stages, and sustaining many principal characters) laments in her unrespected old age, that there was no workhouse to which she could legally sue for admission; if I could produce only one female, seduced upon the boards, and starved in her lodging, compelled by her poverty to sing, and by her sufferings to weep, without any prospect but misery, or any consolation but death; if I could exhibit only one youth who sought refuge from parental authority in the licentious freedom of a wandering company; yet, with three such examples, I should feel myself justified in the account I have given:—but such characters and sufferings are common, and there are few of these societies which could not show members of this description. To some, indeed, the life has its satisfactions: they never expected to be free from labour, and their present kind they think is light: they have no delicate ideas of shame, and therefore duns and hisses give them no other pain than what arises from the fear of not being trusted, joined with the apprehension that they may have nothing to subsist upon except their credit.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIII.

THE ALMS-HOUSE AND TRUSTEES.

Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame. — Pope.

There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pool,
And do a wilful stillness entertain:
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion,
As who should say, " I am Sir Oracle,
" And when I ope my lips let no dog bark."
Merchant of Venice.

Sum felix; quis enim neget? felixque manebo;
Hoc quoque quis dubitet? Tutum me copia fecit.

The frugal Merchant — Rivalship in Modes of Frugality — Private Exceptions to the general Manners — Alms-house built — Its Description — Founder dies — Six Trustees — Sir Denys Brand, a Principal — His Eulogium in the Chronicles of the Day — Truth reckoned invidious on these Occasions — An Explanation of the Magnanimity and Wisdom of Sir Denys — His Kinds of Moderation and Humility — Laughton, his Successor, a planning, ambitious, wealthy Man — Advancement in Life his perpetual Object, and all Things made the Means of it — His Idea of Falsehood — His Resentment dangerous: how removed — Success produces Love of Flattery; his daily Gratification — His Merits and Acts of Kindness — His proper Choice of Almsmen — In this Respect meritorious — His Predecessor not so cautious.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIII.

THE ALMS-HOUSE AND TRUSTEES.

LEAVE now our streets, and in yon plain behold
Those pleasant Seats for the reduced and old;
A merchant's gift, whose wife and children died,
When he to saving all his powers applied;
He wore his coat till bare was every thread,
And with the meanest fare his body fed.
He had a female cousin, who with care
Walk'd in his steps, and learn'd of him to spare;
With emulation and success they strove,
Improving still, still seeking to improve,
As if that useful knowledge they would gain—
How little food would human life sustain:
No pauper came their table's crums to crave;
Scraping they lived, but not a scrap they gave:
When beggars saw the frugal Merchant pass,
It moved their pity, and they said, "Alas!
"Hard is thy fate, my brother," and they felt
A beggar's pride as they that pity dealt

The dogs, who learn of man to scorn the poor,
Bark'd him away from every decent door;
While they who saw him bare, but thought him rich,
To show respect or scorn, they knew not which.
But while our Merchant seem'd so base and mean,
He had his wanderings, sometimes, "not unseen;"
To give in secret was a favourite act,
Yet more than once they took him in the fact:
To scenes of various wo he nightly went,
And serious sums in healing misery spent;
Oft has he cheer'd the wretched, at a rate
For which he daily might have dined on plate;
He has been seen—his hair all silver-white,
Shaking and shining—as he stole by night,
To feed unenvied on his still delight.
A twofold taste he had; to give and spare,
Both were his duties, and had equal care;
It was his joy, to sit alone and fast,
Then send a widow and her boys repast:
Tears in his eyes would, spite of him, appear,
But he from other eyes has kept the tear:
All in a wint'ry night from far he came,
To soothe the sorrows of a suffering dame;
Whose husband robb'd him, and to whom he meant
A ling'ring, but reforming punishment:
Home then he walk'd, and found his anger rise,
When fire and rushlight met his troubled eyes;
But these extinguish'd, and his prayer address'd
To Heaven in hope, he calmly sank to rest.
His seventieth year was pass'd, and then was seen
A building rising on the northern green;

There was no blinding all his neighbours' eyes,
Or surely no one would have seen it rise:
Twelve rooms contiguous stood, and six were near,
There men were placed, and sober matrons here;
There were behind small useful gardens made,
Benches before, and trees to give them shade;
In the first room were seen, above, below,
Some marks of taste, a few attempts at show;
The founder's picture and his arms were there
(Not till he left us), and an elbow'd chair;
There, 'mid these signs of his superior place,
Sat the mild ruler of this humble race.

Within the row are men who strove in vain,
Through years of trouble, wealth and ease to gain;
Less must they have than an appointed sum,
And freemen been, or hither must not come;
They should be decent, and command respect
(Though needing fortune), whom these doors protect,
And should for thirty dismal years have tried
For peace unfelt and competence denied.

Strange! that o'er men thus train'd in sorrow's school,
Power must be held, and they must live by rule;
Infirm, corrected by misfortunes, old,
Their habits settled and their passions cold;
Of health, wealth, power, and worldly cares bereft,
Still must they not at liberty be left;
There must be one to rule them, to restrain
And guide the movements of his erring train.

If then control imperious, check severe,
Be needed where such reverend men appear;

To what would youth, without such checks, aspire,
Free the wild wish, uncurb'd the strong desire?
And where (in college or in camp) they found
The heart ungovern'd and the hand unbound?

His house endow'd, the generous man resign'd
All power to rule, nay power of choice declined;
He and the female saint survived to view
Their work complete, and bade the world adieu!

Six are the Guardians of this happy seat,
And one presides when they on business meet;
As each expires, the five a brother choose;
Nor would *Sir Denys Brand* the charge refuse;
True, 'twas beneath him, "but to do men good
"Was motive never by his heart withstood:"
He too is gone, and they again must strive
To find a man in whom his gifts survive.

Now, in the various records of the dead,
Thy worth, Sir Denys, shall be weigh'd and read;
There we the glory of thy house shall trace,
With each alliance of thy noble race.

Yes! here we have him!—"Came in William's reign,
"The Norman *Brand;* the blood without a stain;
"From the fierce Dane and ruder Saxon clear,
"Pict, Irish, Scot, or Cambrian mountaineer;
"But the pure Norman was the sacred spring,
"And he, Sir Denys, was in heart a king:
"Erect in person and so firm in soul,
"Fortune he seem'd to govern and control;
"Generous as he who gives his all away,
"Prudent as one who toils for weekly pay;
"In him all merits were decreed to meet,
"Sincere though cautious, frank and yet discreet,

" Just all his dealings, faithful every word,
' His passions' master, and his temper's lord."
Yet more, kind dealers in decaying fame?
His magnanimity you next proclaim; [sense,
You give him learning, join'd with sound good
And match his wealth with his benevolence;
What hides the multitude of sins, you add,
Yet seem to doubt if sins he ever had.
Poor honest Truth! thou writ'st of living men,
And art a railer and detractor then;
They die, again to be described, and now
A foe to merit and mankind art thou!
Why banish Truth? It injures not the dead,
It aids not them with flattery to be fed;
And when mankind such perfect pictures view,
They copy less, the more they think them true.
Let us a mortal as he was behold,
And see the dross adhering to the gold;
When we the errors of the virtuous state,
Then erring men their worth may emulate.
View then this picture of a noble mind,
Let him be wise, magnanimous, and kind;
What was the wisdom? Was it not the frown
That keeps all question, all enquiry down?
His words were powerful and decisive all,
But his slow reasons came for no man's call.
" 'Tis thus," he cried, no doubt with kind intent,
To give results and spare all argument:—
" Let it be spared—all men at least agree
" Sir Denys Brand had magnanimity:
" His were no vulgar charities; none saw
" Him like the Merchant to the hut withdraw;

" He left to meaner minds the simple deed,
" By which the houseless rest, the hungry feed;
" His was a public bounty vast and grand,
" 'T was not in him to work with viewless hand;
" He raised the Room that towers above the street,
" A public room where grateful parties meet;
" He first the Life-boat plann'd; to him the place
" Is deep in debt—'twas he revived the Race;
" To every public act this hearty friend
" Would give with freedom or with frankness lend;
" His money built the Jail, nor prisoner yet
" Sits at his ease, but he must feel the debt;
" To these let candour add his vast display;
" Around his mansion all is grand and gay,
" And this is bounty with the name of pay."

I grant the whole, nor from one deed retract,
But wish recorded too the private act:
All these were great, but still our hearts approve
Those simpler tokens of the Christian love;
'Twould give me joy some gracious deed to meet,
That has not call'd for glory through the street:
Who felt for many, could not always shun,
In some soft moment, to be kind to one;
And yet they tell us, when Sir Denys died,
That not a widow in the Borough sigh'd;
Great were his gifts, his mighty heart I own,
But why describe what all the world has known?

The rest is petty pride, the useless art
Of a vain mind to hide a swelling heart:
Small was his private room: men found him there
By a plain table, on a paltry chair;

A wretched floor-cloth, and some prints around,
The easy purchase of a single pound:
These humble trifles and that study small
Make a strong contrast with the servants' hall;
There barely comfort, here a proud excess,
The pompous seat of pamper'd idleness,
Where the sleek rogues with one consent declare,
They would not live upon his honour's fare;
He daily took but one half-hour to dine,
On one poor dish and some three sips of wine;
Then he 'd abuse them for their sumptuous feasts,
And say, "My friends! you make yourselves like beasts;
"One dish suffices any man to dine,
"But you are greedy as a herd of swine;
"Learn to be temperate."—Had they dared t' obey,
He would have praised and turn'd them all away.

Friends met Sir Denys riding in his ground,
And there the meekness of his spirit found:(1)
For that grey coat, not new for many a year,
Hides all that would like decent dress appear;
An old brown pony 't was his will to ride,
Who shuffled onward, and from side to side;
A five-pound purchase, but so fat and sleek,
His very plenty made the creature weak.

"Sir Denys Brand! and on so poor a steed!"
"Poor! it may be—such things I never heed:"
And who that youth behind, of pleasant mien,
Equipp'd as one who wishes to be seen,

(1) [Original edition:—

You'd meet Sir Denys in a morning ride,
And be convinced he 'd not a spark of pride.

Upon a horse, twice victor for a plate,
A noble hunter, bought at dearest rate? —
Him the lad fearing yet resolved to guide,
He curbs his spirit while he strokes his pride.
" A handsome youth, Sir Denys; and a horse
" Of finer figure never trod the course, —
" Yours, without question?" — " Yes! I think a groom
" Bought me the beast; I cannot say the sum:
" I ride him not; it is a foolish pride
" Men have in cattle — but my people ride;
" The boy is — hark ye, sirrah! what's your name?
" Ay, Jacob, yes! I recollect — the same;
" As I bethink me now, a tenant's son —
" I think a tenant, — is your father one?"
There was an idle boy who ran about,
And found his master's humble spirit out;
He would at awful distance snatch a look,
Then run away and hide him in some nook;
" For oh!" quoth he, " I dare not fix my sight
" On him, his grandeur puts me in a fright;
" Oh! Mister Jacob, when you wait on him,
" Do you not quake and tremble every limb?" (1)
The Steward soon had orders — " Summers, see
" That Sam be clothed, and let him wait on me."

(1) [Sir Denys Brand is a portrait. A female servant of Mr. Crabbe, who had previously lived with the original, with great simplicity confessed that she trembled whenever she met him; and "was more afraid of him than she was of God Almighty." The name of the person is omitted — it would only serve to wound the feelings of his relatives yet surviving.]

Sir Denys died, bequeathing all affairs
In trust to *Laughton*'s long-experienced cares;
Before a Guardian, and Sir Denys dead,
All rule and power devolved upon his head,
Numbers are call'd to govern, but in fact
Only the powerful and assuming act.

Laughton, too wise to be a dupe to fame,
Cared not a whit of what descent he came,
Till he was rich; he then conceived the thought
To fish for pedigree, but never caught:
All his desire, when he was young and poor,
Was to advance; he never cared for more:
" Let me buy, sell, be factor, take a wife,
" Take any road, to get along in life."

Was he a miser then? a robber? foe
To those who trusted? a deceiver? — No!
He was ambitious; all his powers of mind
Were to one end controll'd, improved, combined;
Wit, learning, judgment, were, by his account,
Steps for the ladder he design'd to mount:
Such step was money: wealth was but his slave,
For power he gain'd it, and for power he gave:
Full well the Borough knows that he'd the art
Of bringing money to the surest mart;
Friends too were aids, — they led to certain ends,
Increase of power and claim on other friends.
A favourite step was marriage: then he gain'd
Seat in our Hall, and o'er his party reign'd;
Houses and lands he bought, and long'd to buy,
But never drew the springs of purchase dry,
And thus at last they answer'd every call,
The failing found him ready for their fall:

He walks along the street, the mart, the quay,
And looks and mutters, "This belongs to me."
His passions all partook the general bent;
Interest inform'd him when he should resent,
How long resist, and on what terms relent:
In points where he determined to succeed,
In vain might reason or compassion plead;
But gain'd his point, he was the best of men,
'T was loss of time to be vexatious then:
Hence he was mild to all men whom he led,
Of all who dared resist, the scourge and dread.

Falsehood in him was not the useless lie
Of boasting pride or laughing vanity;
It was the gainful, the persuading art,
That made its way and won the doubting heart,
Which argued, soften'd, humbled, and prevail'd,
Nor was it tried till ev'ry truth had fail'd;
No sage on earth could more than he despise
Degrading, poor, unprofitable lies.

Though fond of gain, and grieved by wanton waste,
To social parties he had no distaste;
With one presiding purpose in his view,
He sometimes could descend to trifle too!
Yet, in these moments, he had still the art
To ope the looks and close the guarded heart;
And, like the public host, has sometimes made
A grand repast, for which the guests have paid.

At length, with power endued and wealthy grown,
Frailties and passions, long suppress'd, were shown:
Then to provoke him was a dangerous thing,
His pride would punish, and his temper sting:

His powerful hatred sought th' avenging hour,
And his proud vengeance struck with all his power,
Save when th' offender took a prudent way
The rising storm of fury to allay:
This might he do, and so in safety sleep,
By largely casting to the angry deep;
Or, better yet (its swelling force t' assuage),
By pouring oil of flattery on its rage.

And now, of all the heart approved, possess'd,
Fear'd, favour'd, follow'd, dreaded and caress'd,
He gently yields to one mellifluous joy,
The only sweet that is not found to cloy,
Bland adulation! — other pleasures pall
On the sick taste, and transient are they all;
But this one sweet has such enchanting power,
The more we take, the faster we devour:
Nauseous to those who must the dose apply,
And most disgusting to the standers-by;
Yet in all companies will Laughton feed,
Nor care how grossly men perform the deed.

As gapes the nursling, or, what comes more near,
Some Friendly-Island chief, for hourly cheer;
When wives and slaves, attending round his seat,
Prepare by turns the masticated meat:
So for this master, husband, parent, friend,
His ready slaves their various efforts blend,
And, to their lord still eagerly inclined,
Pour the crude trash of a dependent mind.

But let the Muse assign the man his due,
Worth he possess'd, nor were his virtues few: —
He sometimes help'd the injured in their cause;
His power and purse have back'd the failing laws;

He for religion has a due respect,
And all his serious notions are correct;
Although he pray'd and languish'd for a son,
He grew resign'd when Heaven denied him one;
He never to this quiet mansion sends
Subject unfit, in compliment to friends;
Not so Sir Denys, who would yet protest
He always chose the worthiest and the best:
Not men in trade by various loss brought down,
But those whose glory once amazed the town,
Who their last guinea in their pleasures spent,
Yet never fell so low as to repent:
To these his pity he could largely deal,
Wealth they had known, and therefore want could feel.

Three seats were vacant while Sir Denys reign'd,
And three such favourites their admission gain'd;
These let us view, still more to understand
The moral feelings of Sir Denys Brand. (1)

(1) For the Alms-house itself, its Governors, and Inhabitants, I have not much to offer, in favour of the subject or of the character. One of these, Sir Denys Brand, may be considered as too highly placed for an author, who seldom ventures above middle life, to delineate; and, indeed, I had some idea of reserving him for another occasion, where he might have appeared with those in his own rank; but then it is most uncertain whether he would ever appear, and he has been so many years prepared for the public, whenever opportunity might offer, that I have at length given him place, and though with his inferiors, yet as a ruler over them.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIV.

INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE.

BLANEY.

Sed quia cæcus inest vitiis amor, omne futurum
Despicitur; suadent brevem præsentia fructum,
Et ruit in vetitum damni secura libido. — CLAUD. *in Eutrop.*

—— Nunquam parvo contenta paratu,
Et quæsitorum terrâ pelagoque ciborum
Ambitiosa fames, et lautæ gloria mensæ. — LUCAN.

Et Luxus, populator Opum, tibi semper adhærens,
Infelix humili gressu comitatur Egestas. — CLAUD. *in Ruf.*

Behold what blessing wealth to life can lend! — POPE.

Blaney, a wealthy Heir, dissipated, and reduced to Poverty — His Fortune restored by Marriage: again consumed — His Manner of living in the West Indies — Recalled to a larger Inheritance — His more refined and expensive Luxuries — His Method of quieting Conscience — Death of his Wife — Again become poor — His Method of supporting Existence — His Ideas of Religion — His Habits and Connections when old — Admitted into the Alms-house.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIV.

LIFE OF BLANEY. (1)

OBSERVE that tall pale Veteran! what a look
Of shame and guilt!—who cannot read that book?
Misery and mirth are blended in his face,
Much innate vileness and some outward grace;
There wishes strong and stronger griefs are seen
Looks ever changed, and never one serene:
Show not that manner, and these features all,
The serpent's cunning and the sinner's fall?
Hark to that laughter! —'t is the way he takes
To force applause for each vile jest he makes;
Such is yon man, by partial favour sent
To these calm seats to ponder and repent,
Blaney, a wealthy heir at twenty-one,
At twenty-five was ruin'd and undone,

(1) [This character is drawn from real life; though the extreme degradation is exaggerated. The original has been long dead—leaving no relatives. He was a half-pay major in a garrison town on the eastern coast.]

These years with grievous crimes we need not load,
He found his ruin in the common road! —
Gamed without skill, without inquiry bought,
Lent without love, and borrow'd without thought.
But, gay and handsome, he had soon the dower
Of a kind wealthy widow in his power:
Then he aspired to loftier flights of vice,
To singing harlots of enormous price:
He took a jockey in his gig to buy
A horse, so valued, that a duke was shy:
To gain the plaudits of the knowing few,
Gamblers and grooms, what would not Blaney do?
His dearest friend, at that improving age,
Was Hounslow Dick, who drove the western stage.
Cruel he was not — If he left his wife,
He left her to her own pursuits in life;
Deaf to reports, to all expenses blind,
Profuse, not just, and careless, but not kind.
Yet, thus assisted, ten long winters pass'd
In wasting guineas ere he saw his last;
Then he began to reason, and to feel
He could not dig, nor had he learn'd to steal;
And should he beg as long as he might live,
He justly fear'd that nobody would give:
But he could charge a pistol, and at will,
All that was mortal, by a bullet kill:
And he was taught, by those whom he would call
Man's surest guides — that he was mortal all.
While thus he thought, still waiting for the day,
When he should dare to blow his brains away,

A place for him a kind relation found,
Where England's monarch ruled, but far from
English ground:
He gave employ that might for bread suffice,
Correct his habits and restrain his vice.
Here Blaney tried (what such man's miseries
teach)
To find what pleasures were within his reach;
These he enjoy'd, though not in just the style
He once possess'd them in his native isle;
Congenial souls he found in every place,
Vice in all soils, and charms in every race:
His lady took the same amusing way,
And laugh'd at Time till he had turn'd them grey:
At length for England once again they steer'd,
By ancient views and new designs endear'd;
His kindred died, and Blaney now became
An heir to one who never heard his name.(1)
What could he now?—The man had tried before
The joys of youth, and they were joys no more;
To vicious pleasure he was still inclined,
But vice must now be season'd and refined;
Then as a swine he would on pleasure seize,
Now common pleasures had no power to please:
Beauty alone has for the vulgar charms,
He wanted beauty trembling with alarms:
His was no more a youthful dream of joy,
The wretch desired to ruin and destroy;

(1) [To the character of Blaney we object, as offensive from its extreme and impotent depravity. The first part of his history, however, is sketched with a masterly hand; and affords a good specimen of that sententious and antithetical manner by which Mr. Crabbe sometimes reminds us of the style and versification of Pope.—JEFFREY.]

He bought indulgence with a boundless price,
Most pleased when decency bow'd down to vice,
When a fair dame her husband's honour sold,
And a frail countess play'd for Blaney's gold.
" But did not conscience in her anger rise?'
Yes! and he learn'd her terrors to despise;
When stung by thought, to soothing books he fled
And grew composed and harden'd as he read;
Tales of Voltaire, and essays gay and slight,
Pleased him, and shone with their phosphoric light;
Which, though it rose from objects vile and base,
Where'er it came threw splendour on the place,
And was that light which the deluded youth,
And this grey sinner, deem'd the light of truth.
He different works for different cause admired,
Some fix'd his judgment, some his passions fired;
To cheer the mind and raise a dormant flame,
He had the books, decreed to lasting shame,
Which those who read are careful not to name:
These won to vicious act the yielding heart,
And then the cooler reasoners soothed the smart.
He heard of Blount(1), and Mandeville(2), and
Chubb, (3)
How they the doctors of their day would drub;

(1) [The author of "The Oracles of Reason," and of an infidel treatise, entitled "Anima Mundi." He put an end to his existence, by shooting himself, in 1693.]

(2) [Author of "The Fable of the Bees," written to prove, that moral virtue is the invention of knaves, and Christian virtue the imposition of fools; that vice is necessary, and alone sufficient to render society flourishing and happy.]

(3) [A noted deistical writer. He died in 1746, leaving behind him two volumes of tracts, which were afterwards published.]

How Hume had dwelt on Miracles so well,
That none would now believe a miracle;
And though he cared not works so grave to read,
He caught their faith, and sign'd the sinner's creed.

Thus was he pleased to join the laughing side,
Nor ceased the laughter when his lady died;
Yet was he kind and careful of her fame,
And on her tomb inscribed a virtuous name;
"A tender wife, respected, and so forth,"—
The marble still bears witness to the worth.

He has some children, but he knows not where;
Something they cost, but neither love nor care;
A father's feelings he has never known,
His joys, his sorrows, have been all his own.

He now would build—and lofty seat he built,
And sought, in various ways, relief from guilt.
Restless, for ever anxious to obtain
Ease for the heart by ramblings of the brain,
He would have pictures, and of course a Taste, (1)
And found a thousand means his wealth to waste.
Newmarket steeds he bought at mighty cost;
They sometimes won, but Blaney always lost.

Quick came his ruin, came when he had still
For life a relish, and in pleasure skill:
By his own idle reckoning he supposed
His wealth would last him till his life was closed;
But no! he found this final hoard was spent,
While he had years to suffer and repent.
Yet, at the last, his noble mind to show,
And in his misery how he bore the blow,

(1) ["What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?
Some demon answered, 'Visto!' have a Taste.—POPE.]

He view'd his only guinea, then suppress'd,
For a short time, the tumults in his breast,
And, moved by pride, by habit and despair,
Gave it an opera-bird to hum an air.

Come, ye! who live for Pleasure, come, behold
A man of pleasure when he's poor and old;
When he looks back through life, and cannot find
A single action to relieve his mind;
When he looks forward, striving still to keep
A steady prospect of eternal sleep;
When not one friend is left, of all the train
Whom 'twas his pride and boast to entertain,—
Friends now employ'd from house to house to run,
And say, "Alas! poor Blaney is undone!"—
Those whom he shook with ardour by the hand,
By whom he stood as long as he could stand,
Who seem'd to him from all deception clear,
And who, more strange! might think themselves sincere.

Lo! now the hero shuffling through the town,
To hunt a dinner and to beg a crown;
To tell an idle tale, that boys may smile;
To bear a strumpet's billet-doux a mile;
To cull a wanton for a youth of wealth
(With reverend view to both his taste and health);
To be a useful, needy thing between
Fear and desire—the pander and the screen;
To flatter pictures, houses, horses, dress,
The wildest fashion, or the worst excess,
To be the grey seducer, and entice
Unbearded folly into acts of vice;

And then, to level every fence which law
And virtue fix to keep the mind in awe,
He first inveigles youth to walk astray,
Next prompts and soothes them in their fatal way,
Then vindicates the deed, and makes the mind his prey.

Unhappy man! what pains he takes to state—
(Proof of his fear!) that all below is fate;
That all proceed in one appointed track,
Where none can stop, or take their journey back:
Then what is vice or virtue?—Yet he'll rail
At priests till memory and quotation fail;
He reads, to learn the various ills they've done,
And calls them vipers, every mother's son.

He is the harlot's aid, who wheedling tries
To move her friend for vanity's supplies;
To weak indulgence he allures the mind,
Loth to be duped, but willing to be kind;
And if successful—what the labour pays?
He gets the friend's contempt and Chloe's praise,
Who, in her triumph, condescends to say,
"What a good creature Blaney was to-day!"

Hear the poor demon when the young attend,
And willing ear to vile experience lend;
When he relates (with laughing, leering eye)
The tale licentious, mix'd with blasphemy:
No genuine gladness his narrations cause,
The frailest heart denies sincere applause;
And many a youth has turn'd him half aside,
And laugh'd aloud, the sign of shame to hide.

Blaney, no aid in his vile cause to lose,
Buys pictures, prints, and a licentious muse;

He borrows every help from every art,
To stir the passions and mislead the heart:
But from the subject let us soon escape,
Nor give this feature all its ugly shape;
Some to their crimes escape from satire owe;
Who shall describe what Blaney dares to show?

While thus the man, to vice and passion slave,
Was, with his follies, moving to the grave,
The ancient ruler of this mansion died,
And Blaney boldly for the seat applied:
Sir Denys Brand, then guardian, join'd his suit;
"'Tis true," said he, "the fellow's quite a brute—
"A very beast; but yet, with all his sin,
"He has a manner—let the devil in."

They half complied, they gave the wish'd retreat,
But raised a worthier to the vacant seat.

Thus forced on ways unlike each former way,
Thus led to prayer without a heart to pray,
He quits the gay and rich, the young and free,
Among the badge-men with a badge to be:
He sees an humble tradesman raised to rule
The grey-beard pupils of this moral school;
Where he himself, an old licentious boy,
Will nothing learn, and nothing can enjoy;
In temp'rate measures he must eat and drink,
And, pain of pains! must live alone and think.

In vain, by fortune's smiles, thrice affluent made
Still has he debts of ancient date unpaid;
Thrice into penury by error thrown,
Not one right maxim has he made his own;
The old men shun him,—some his vices hate,
And all abhor his principles and prate;

Nor love nor care for him will mortal show,
Save a frail sister in the female row. (1)

(1) Blaney and Clelia, a male and female inhabitant of this mansion, are drawn at some length; and I may be thought to have given them attention which they do not merit. I plead not for the originality, but for the truth of the character; and though it may not be very pleasing, it may be useful to delineate (for certain minds) these mixtures of levity and vice; people who are thus incurably vain and determinately worldly; thus devoted to enjoyment and insensible of shame, and so miserably fond of their pleasures, that they court even the remembrance with eager solicitation, by conjuring up the ghosts of departed indulgences with all the aid that memory can afford them. These characters demand some attention, because they hold out a warning to that numerous class of young people who are too lively to be discreet; to whom the purpose of life is amusement, and who are always in danger of falling into vicious habits, because they have too much activity to be quiet, and too little strength to be steady.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XV.

INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE.

CLELIA.

"She early found herself mistress of herself. All she did was right: all she said was admired. Early, very early, did she dismiss blushes from her cheek: she could not blush because she could not doubt: and silence, whatever was her subject, was as much a stranger to her as diffidence. — RICHARDSON.

Quo fugit Venus? heu! Quove color? decens
Quo motus? Quid habes illius, illius,
Quæ spirabat amores,
Quæ me surpuerat mihi? — HORAT. lib. iv. od. 13.

Her lively and pleasant Manners — Her Reading and Decision — Her Intercourse with different Classes of Society — Her Kind of Character — The favoured Lover — Her Management of him: his of her — After one Period, Clelia with an Attorney: her Manner and Situation there — Another such Period, when her Fortune still declines — Mistress of an Inn — A Widow — Another such Interval: she becomes poor and infirm, but still vain and frivolous — The fallen Vanity — Admitted into the House: meets Blaney.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XV.

CLELIA. (1)

We had a sprightly nymph—in every town
Are some such sprights, who wander up and down;
She had her useful arts, and could contrive,
In Time's despite, to stay at twenty-five;—
"Here will I rest; move on, thou lying year,
"This is mine age, and I will rest me here."
Arch was her look, and she had pleasant ways
Your good opinion of her heart to raise;
Her speech was lively, and with ease express'd,
And well she judged the tempers she address'd:
If some soft stripling had her keenness felt,
She knew the way to make his anger melt;
Wit was allow'd her, though but few could bring
Direct example of a witty thing;

(1) [Clelia, like Blaney, is a strong resemblance of an individual known to Mr. Crabbe in early life. She has been dead nearly half a century; but, having relatives, it would be wrong to be more particular.]

'Twas that gay, pleasant, smart, engaging speech,
Her beaux admired, and just within their reach;
Not indiscreet, perhaps, but yet more free
Than prudish nymphs allow their wit to be.
Novels and plays, with poems old and new,
Were all the books our nymph attended to;
Yet from the press no treatise issued forth,
But she would speak precisely of its worth.
She with the London stage familiar grew,
And every actor's name and merit knew;
She told how this or that their part mistook,
And of the rival Romeos gave the look;
Of either house 'twas hers the strength to see,
Then judge with candour—"Drury Lane for me."
What made this knowledge, what this skill com-
A fortnight's visit in Whitechapel Street. [plete?
Her place in life was rich and poor between,
With those a favourite, and with these a queen;
She could her parts assume, and condescend
To friends more humble while an humble friend;
And thus a welcome, lively guest could pass,
Threading her pleasant way from class to class.
"Her reputation?"—That was like her wit,
And seem'd her manner and her state to fit;
Something there was, what, none presumed to say,
Clouds lightly passing on a smiling day,—
Whispers and hints which went from ear to ear,
And mix'd reports no judge on earth could clear.
But of each sex a friendly number press'd
To joyous banquets this alluring guest:
There, if indulging mirth, and freed from awe,
If pleasing all, and pleased with all she saw,

Her speech were free, and such as freely dwelt
On the same feelings all around her felt;
Or if some fond presuming favourite tried
To come so near as once to be denied;
Yet not with brow so stern or speech so nice,
But that he ventured on denial twice:—
If these have been, and so has Scandal taught,
Yet Malice never found the proof she sought.
But then came one, the Lovelace of his day,
Rich, proud, and crafty, handsome, brave, and gay;
Yet loved he not those labour'd plans and arts,
But left the business to the ladies' hearts,
And when he found them in a proper train,
He thought all else superfluous and vain:
But in that training he was deeply taught,
And rarely fail'd of gaining all he sought;
He knew how far directly on to go,
How to recede and dally to and fro;
How to make all the passions his allies,
And, when he saw them in contention rise,
To watch the wrought-up heart, and conquer by surprise.
Our heroine fear'd him not; it was her part,
To make sure conquest of such gentle heart—
Of one so mild and humble; for she saw
In Henry's eye a love chastised by awe.
Her thoughts of virtue were not all sublime,
Nor virtuous all her thoughts; 't was now her time
To bait each hook, in every way to please,
And the rich prize with dext'rous hand to seize.
She had no virgin-terrors; she could stray
In all love's maze, nor fear to lose her way;

Nay, could go near the precipice, nor dread
A failing caution or a giddy head;
She'd fix her eyes upon the roaring flood,
And dance upon the brink where danger stood.
'T was nature all, she judged, in one so young,
To drop the eye and falter in the tongue;
To be about to take, and then command
His daring wish, and only view the hand:
Yes! all was nature; it became a maid
Of gentle soul t'encourage love afraid;—
He, so unlike the confident and bold,
Would fly in mute despair to find her cold:
The young and tender germ requires the sun
To make it spread; it must be smiled upon.
Thus the kind virgin gentle means devised,
To gain a heart so fond, a hand so prized;
More gentle still she grew, to change her way,
Would cause confusion, danger, and delay:
Thus (an increase of gentleness her mode),
She took a plain, unvaried, certain road,
And every hour believed success was near,
Till there was nothing left to hope or fear.
It must be own'd that, in this strife of hearts,
Man has advantage—has superior arts:
The lover's aim is to the nymph unknown,
Nor is she always certain of her own;
Or has her fears, nor these can so disguise,
But he who searches, reads them in her eyes,
In the avenging frown, in the regretting sighs:
These are his signals, and he learns to steer
The straighter course whenever they appear.

"Pass we ten years, and what was Clelia's fate?"
At an attorney's board alert she sate,
Not legal mistress: he with other men
Once sought her hand, but other views were then;
And when he knew he might the bliss command,
He other blessing sought, without the hand;
For still he felt alive the lambent flame,
And offer'd her a home,—and home she came.

There, though her higher friendships lived no more,
She loved to speak of what she shared before—
"Of the dear Lucy, heiress of the hall,—
"Of good Sir Peter,— of their annual ball,
"And the fair countess!—Oh! she loved them all!"
The humbler clients of her friend would stare,
The knowing smile,—but neither caused her care;
She brought her spirits to her humble state,
And soothed with idle dreams her frowning fate.

"Ten summers pass'd, and how was Clelia then?"—
Alas! she suffer'd in this trying ten;
The pair had parted: who to him attend,
Must judge the nymph unfaithful to her friend;
But who on her would equal faith bestow,
Would think him rash,—and surely she must know.

Then as a matron Clelia taught a school,
But nature gave not talents fit for rule:
Yet now, though marks of wasting years were seen,
Some touch of sorrow, some attack of spleen;
Still there was life, a spirit quick and gay,
And lively speech and elegant array.

The Griffin's landlord these allured so far,
He made her mistress of his heart and bar;
He had no idle retrospective whim,
Till she was his, her deeds concern'd not him:
So far was well,—but Clelia thought not fit
(In all the Griffin needed) to submit:
Gaily to dress and in the bar preside,
Soothed the poor spirit of degraded pride;
But cooking, waiting, welcoming a crew
Of noisy guests, were arts she never knew:
Hence daily wars, with temporary truce,
His vulgar insult, and her keen abuse;
And as their spirits wasted in the strife,
Both took the Griffin's ready aid of life;
But she with greater prudence—Harry tried
More powerful aid, and in the trial died;
Yet drew down vengeance: in no distant time,
Th' insolvent Griffin struck his wings sublime;—
Forth from her palace walk'd th' ejected queen,
And show'd to frowning fate a look serene;
Gay spite of time, though poor, yet well attired,
Kind without love, and vain if not admired.

Another term is past; ten other years
In various trials, troubles, views, and fears:
Of these some pass'd in small attempts at trade;
Houses she kept for widowers lately made;
For now she said, "They 'll miss th' endearing friend,
"And I'll be there the soften'd heart to bend."

And true a part was done as Clelia plann'd—
The heart was soften'd, but she miss'd the hand
She wrote a novel, and Sir Denys said
The dedication was the best he read;
But Edgeworths, Smiths, and Radcliffes so engross'd
The public ear, that all her pains were lost.
To keep a toy-shop was attempt the last,
There too she fail'd, and schemes and hopes were past.

Now friendless, sick, and old, and wanting bread,
The first-born tears of fallen pride were shed—
True, bitter tears; and yet that wounded pride,
Among the poor, for poor distinctions sigh'd.
Though now her tales were to her audience fit;
Though loud her tones, and vulgar grown he wit,
Though now her dress—(but let me not explain
The piteous patchwork of the needy-vain,
The flirtish form to coarse materials lent,
And one poor robe through fifty fashions sent);
Though all within was sad, without was mean,—
Still 'twas her wish, her comfort, to be seen:
She would to plays on lowest terms resort,
Where once her box was to the beaux a court;
And, strange delight! to that same house where she
Join'd in the dance, all gaiety and glee,
Now with the menials crowding to the wall,
She'd see, not share, the pleasures of the ball,
And with degraded vanity unfold,
How she too triumph'd in the years of old.
To her poor friends 't is now her pride to tell,
On what a height she stood before she fell;

At church she points to one tall seat, and "There
"We sat," she cries, "when my papa was mayor."
Not quite correct in what she now relates,
She alters persons, and she forges dates;
And, finding memory's weaker help decay'd,
She boldly calls invention to her aid.
Touch'd by the pity he had felt before,
For her Sir Denys oped the Alms-house door:
"With all her faults," he said, "the woman knew
"How to distinguish — had a manner too;
"And, as they say she is allied to some
"In decent station — let the creature come."
Here she and Blaney meet, and take their view
Of all the pleasures they would still pursue:
Hour after hour they sit, and nothing hide
Of vices past; their follies are their pride;
What to the sober and the cool are crimes,
They boast — exulting in those happy times;
The darkest deeds no indignation raise,
The purest virtue never wins their praise;
But still they on their ancient joys dilate,
Still with regret departed glories state,
And mourn their grievous fall, and curse their rigorous fate. (1)

(1) ["Clelia is another worthless character that is drawn with infinite spirit, and a thorough knowledge of human nature. She began life as a sprightly, talking, flirting girl, who passed for a wit and a beauty in the half-bred circle of the Borough, and who, in laying herself out to entrap a youth of distinction, unfortunately fell a victim to his superior art, and forfeited her place in society. She then became the smart mistress of a dashing attorney — then tried to teach a school — lived as the favourite of an innkeeper — let lodgings — wrote novels — set up a toy-shop — and, finally, was admitted into the Alms-house. There is nothing very interesting, perhaps, in such a story; but the details of it shew the wonderful

accuracy of the author's observation of character, and give it, and many of his other pieces, a value of the same kind that some pictures are thought to derive from the truth and minuteness of the anatomy which they display. There is something original, too, and well conceived, in the tenacity with which he represents this frivolous person as adhering to her paltry characteristics under every change of circumstances." — JEFFREY.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVI

INHABITANTS OF THE ALMS-HOUSE.

BENBOW.

Ebrietas tibi fida comes, tibi Luxus, et atris
Circa te semper volitans Infamia pennis. — SILV. ITALICUS.

Benbow, an improper companion for the Badgemen of the Alms-house — He resembles Bardolph — Left in Trade by his Father — Contracts useless Friendships — His Friends drink with him, and employ others — Called worthy and honest! Why — Effect of Wine on the Mind of Man — Benbow's common Subject — The Praise of departed Friends and Patrons — 'Squire Asgill, at the Grange: his Manners, Servants, Friends — True to his Church: ought therefore to be spared — His Son's different Conduct — Vexation of the Father's Spirit if admitted to see the Alteration — Captain Dowling, a boon Companion, ready to drink at all Times, and with any Company: famous in his Club-room — His easy Departure — Dolly Murray, a Maiden advanced in Years: abides by Ratafia and Cards — Her free Manners — Her Skill in the Game — Her Preparation and Death — Benbow, how interrupted; his Submission.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVI.

BENBOW.

See! yonder badgeman, with that glowing face,
A meteor shining in this sober place;
Vast sums were paid, and many years were past,
Ere gems so rich around their radiance cast!
Such was the fiery front that Bardolph wore,
Guiding his master to the tavern door; (1)
There first that meteor rose, and there alone,
In its due place, the rich effulgence shone:
But this strange fire the seat of peace invades,
And shines portentous in these solemn shades.
Benbow, a boon companion, long approved
By jovial sets, and (as he thought) beloved,
Was judged as one to joy and friendship prone,
And deem'd injurious to himself alone;

(1) "Thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp—if thou wast any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be by this fire. Oh! thou'rt a perpetual triumph, thou hast saved me a thousand marks in links and torches, walking in a night betwixt tavern and tavern."—Shakspeare.

Gen'rous and free, he paid but small regard
To trade, and fail'd; and some declared "'twas hard:"
These were his friends—his foes conceived the case
Of common kind; he sought and found disgrace:
The reasoning few, who neither scorn'd nor loved,
His feelings pitied and his faults reproved.

Benbow, the father, left possessions fair,
A worthy name and business to his heir;
Benbow, the son, those fair possessions sold,
And lost his credit, while he spent the gold:
He was a jovial trader: men enjoy'd
The night with him; his day was unemploy'd;
So when his credit and his cash were spent,
Here, by mistaken pity, he was sent;
Of late he came, with passions unsubdued,
And shared and cursed the hated solitude,
Where gloomy thoughts arise, where grievous cares
intrude.

Known but in drink,—he found an easy friend,
Well pleased his worth and honour to commend;
And thus inform'd, the guardian of the trust
Heard the applause and said the claim was just
A worthy soul! unfitted for the strife,
Care, and contention of a busy life;—
Worthy, and why?—that o'er the midnight bowl
He made his friend the partner of his soul,
And any man his friend:—then thus in glee,
"I speak my mind, I love the truth," quoth he;
Till 't was his fate that useful truth to find,
'T is sometimes prudent not to speak the mind.

With wine inflated, man is all upblown,
And feels a power which he believes his own;

With fancy soaring to the skies, he thinks
His all the virtues all the while he drinks;
But when the gas from the balloon is gone,
When sober thoughts and serious cares come on,
Where then the worth that in himself he found? —
Vanish'd — and he sank grov'ling on the ground.
Still some conceit will Benbow's mind inflate,
Poor as he is, — 't is pleasant to relate
The joys he once possess'd — it soothes his present state.
Seated with some grey beadsman, he regrets
His former feasting, though it swell'd his debts;
Topers once famed, his friends in earlier days,
Well he describes, and thinks description praise:
Each hero's worth with much delight he paints;
Martyrs they were, and he would make them saints.
" Alas! alas! " Old England now may say,
" My glory withers; it has had its day:
" We're fallen on evil times; men read and think;
" Our bold forefathers loved to fight and drink.
" Then lived the good 'Squire Asgill — what a change
" Has death and fashion shown us at the Grange!
" He bravely thought it best became his rank,
" That all his tenants and his tradesmen drank;
" He was delighted from his favourite room
" To see them 'cross the park go daily home
" Praising aloud the liquor and the host,
" And striving who should venerate him most.
" No pride had he, and there was difference small
" Between the master's and the servants' hall;
" And here or there the guests were welcome all.

" Of Heaven's free gifts he took no special care.
" He never quarrel'd for a simple hare;
" But sought, by giving sport, a sportsman's name,
" Himself a poacher, though at other game:
" He never planted nor enclosed — his trees
" Grew like himself, untroubled and at ease:
" Bounds of all kinds he hated, and had felt
" Choked and imprison'd in a modern belt,
" Which some rare genius now has twined about
" The good old house, to keep old neighbours out.
" Along his valleys, in the evening-hours,
" The borough-damsels stray'd to gather flowers,
" Or, by the brakes and brushwood of the park,
" To take their pleasant rambles in the dark.
" Some prudes, of rigid kind, forbore to call
" On the kind females — favourites at the hall;
" But better natures saw, with much delight,
" The different orders of mankind unite;
" 'T was schooling pride to see the footman wait,
" Smile on his sister and receive her plate.
" His worship ever was a churchman true,
" He held in scorn the methodistic crew;
" May God defend the Church, and save the King,
" He'd pray devoutly and divinely sing.
" Admit that he the holy day would spend
" As priests approved not, still he was a friend:
" Much then I blame the preacher, as too nice,
" To call such trifles by the name of vice;
" Hinting, though gently and with cautious speech,
" Of good example — 't is their trade to preach.
" But still 't was pity, when the worthy 'squire
" Stuck to the church, what more could they require?

" 'T was almost joining that fanatic crew,
" To throw such morals at his honour's pew;
" A weaker man, had he been so reviled,
" Had left the place — he only swore and smiled.
" But think, ye rectors and ye curates, think,
" Who are your friends, and at their frailties wink;
" Conceive not — mounted on your Sunday-throne,
" Your firebrands fall upon your foes alone;
" They strike your patrons — and should all withdraw,
" In whom your wisdoms may discern a flaw,
" You would the flower of all your audience lose,
" And spend your crackers on their empty pews.
" The father dead, the son has found a wife,
" And lives a formal, proud, unsocial life; —
" The lands are now enclosed; the tenants all,
" Save at a rent-day, never see the hall:
" No lass is suffer'd o'er the walks to come,
" And if there 's love, they have it all at home.
" Oh! could the ghost of our good 'squire arise,
" And see such change; would it believe its eyes?
" Would it not glide about from place to place,
" And mourn the manners of a feebler race?
" At that long table, where the servants found
" Mirth and abundance while the year went round;
" Where a huge pollard on the winter-fire,
" At a huge distance made them all retire;
" Where not a measure in the room was kept,
" And but one rule—they tippled till they slept —
" There would it see a pale old hag preside,
" A thing made up of stinginess and pride;

" Who carves the meat, as if the flesh could feel;
" Careless whose flesh must miss the plenteous meal;
" Here would the ghost a small coal-fire behold,
" Not fit to keep one body from the cold;
" Then would it flit to higher rooms, and stay
" To view a dull, dress'd company at play;
" All the old comfort, all the genial fare
" For ever gone! how sternly would it stare:
" And though it might not to their view appear,
" 'Twould cause among them lassitude and fear;
" Then wait to see—where he delight has seen—
" The dire effect of fretfulness and spleen.
" Such were the worthies of these better days;
" We had their blessings—they shall have our praise.
" Of captain Dowling would you hear me speak?
" I'd sit and sing his praises for a week:
" He was a man, and man-like all his joy,—
" I'm led to question was he ever boy?
" Beef was his breakfast;—if from sea and salt,
" It relish'd better with his wine of malt;
" Then, till he dined, if walking in or out,
" Whether the gravel teased him or the gout,
" Though short in wind and flannel'd every limb,
" He drank with all who had concerns with him:
" Whatever trader, agent, merchant, came,
" They found him ready, every hour the same;
" Whatever liquors might between them pass,
" He took them all, and never balk'd his glass:
" Nay, with the seamen working in the ship,
" At their request, he'd share the grog and flip:

" But in the club-room was his chief delight,
" And punch the favourite liquor of the night;
" Man after man they from the trial shrank,
" And Dowling ever was the last who drank:
" Arrived at home, he, ere he sought his bed,
" With pipe and brandy would compose his head;
" Then half an hour was o'er the news beguiled,
" When he retired as harmless as a child.
" Set but aside the gravel and the gout,
" And breathing short—his sand ran fairly out.
" At fifty-five we lost him—after that
" Life grows insipid and its pleasures flat;
" He had indulged in all that man can have,
" He did not drop a dotard to his grave;
" Still to the last, his feet upon the chair,
" With rattling lungs now gone beyond repair;
" When on each feature death had fix'd his stamp,
" And not a doctor could the body vamp;
" Still at the last, to his beloved bowl
" He clung, and cheer'd the sadness of his soul;
" For though a man may not have much to fear,
" Yet death looks ugly, when the view is near:
" —' I go,' he said, ' but still my friends shall say,
" ' 'Twas as a man—I did not sneak away;
" ' An honest life with worthy souls I've spent,—
" ' Come, fill my glass;'—he took it and he went.
" Poor Dolly Murray!—I might live to see
" My hundredth year, but no such lass as she.
" Easy by nature, in her humour gay,
" She chose her comforts, ratafia and play:
" She loved the social game, the decent glass;
" And was a jovial, friendly, laughing lass;

" We sat not then at Whist demure and still,
" But pass'd the pleasant hours at gay Quadrille:
" Lame in her side, we placed her in her seat,
" Her hands were free, she cared not for her feet;
" As the game ended, came the glass around,
' (So was the loser cheer'd, the winner crown'd.)
" Mistress of secrets, both the young and old
" In her confided—not a tale she told;
" Love never made impression on her mind,
" She held him weak, and all his captives blind;
" She suffer'd no man her free soul to vex,
" Free from the weakness of her gentle sex;
" One with whom ours unmoved conversing sate,
" In cool discussion or in free debate. (1)
" Once in her chair we'd placed the good old lass,
" Where first she took her preparation-glass;
" By lucky thought she'd been that day at prayers,
" And long before had fix'd her small affairs;
" So all was easy—on her cards she cast
" A smiling look; I saw the thought that pass'd:
" ' A king,' she call'd—though conscious of her skill,
" ' Do more,' I answer'd—' More,' she said, ' I will;'
" And more she did—cards answer'd to her call,
" She saw the mighty to her mightier fall:

(1) [Original edition:—

She suffered no man her free soul to vex,
Her sex's pattern, without thoughts of sex;
Our timid girls and lovers, half afraid,
All shunn'd the speeches of the frank old maid.]

" ' A vole ! a vole !' she cried, ' 'tis fairly won,
" ' My game is ended and my work is done ;'—
" This said, she gently, with a single sigh,
" Died as one taught and practised how to die.
" Such were the dead-departed ; I survive,
" To breathe in pain among the dead-alive."
The bell then call'd these ancient men to pray,
" Again !" said Benbow, — " tolls it every day ?
" Where is the life I led ?" — He sigh'd and walk'd
his way. (1)

(1) Benbow may be thought too low and despicable to be admitted here ; but he is a Borough-character, and however disgusting in some respects a picture may be, it will please some, and be tolerated by many, if it can boast that one merit of being a faithful likeness.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVII.

THE HOSPITAL AND GOVERNORS.

Blessed be the man who provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble.

Quas dederis, solas semper habebis opes. — MARTIAL.

Nil negat, et sese vel non poscentibus offert. — CLAUDIAN.

Decipias alios verbis voltuque benigno;
Nam mihi jam notus dissimulator eris. — MARTIAL.

Christian Charity anxious to provide for future as well as present Miseries — Hence the Hospital for the Diseased — Description of a recovered Patient — The Building: how erected — The Patrons and Governors — Eusebius — The more active Manager of Business a moral and correct Contributor — One of different Description — Good, the Result, however intermixed with Imperfection.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVII.

THE HOSPITAL AND GOVERNORS.

An ardent spirit dwells with Christian love,
The eagle's vigour in the pitying dove;
'T is not enough that we with sorrow sigh;
That we tho wants of pleading man supply·
That we in sympathy with sufferers feel,
Nor hear a grief without a wish to heal;
Not these suffice—to sickness, pain, and wo,
The Christian spirit loves with aid to go;
Will not be sought, waits not for want to plead,
But seeks the duty — nay, prevents the need;
Her utmost aid to every ill applies,
And plans relief for coming miseries.

Hence yonder Building rose: on either side
Far stretch'd the wards, all airy, warm, and wide;
And every ward has beds by comfort spread,
And smooth'd for him who suffers on the bed:
There all have kindness, most relief,—for some
Is cure complete,—it is the sufferer's home:

Fevers and chronic ills, corroding pains,
Each accidental mischief man sustains;
Fractures and wounds, and wither'd limbs and lame,
With all that, slow or sudden, vex our frame,
Have here attendance—here the sufferers lie,
(Where love and science every aid apply,)
And heal'd with rapture live, or soothed by comfort die.

See! one relieved from anguish, and to-day
Allow'd to walk and look an hour away;
Two months confined by fever, frenzy, pain,
He comes abroad and is himself again:
'T was in the spring, when carried to the place,
The snow fell down and melted in his face.

'T is summer now; all objects gay and new,
Smiling alike the viewer and the view:
He stops as one unwilling to advance,
Without another and another glance;
With what a pure and simple joy he sees
Those sheep and cattle browzing at their ease;
Easy himself, there 's nothing breathes or moves,
But he would cherish—all that lives he loves:
Observing every ward as round he goes,
He thinks what pain, what danger they enclose;
Warm in his wish for all who suffer there,
At every view he meditates a prayer:
No evil counsels in his breast abide,
There joy and love, and gratitude reside.

The wish that Roman necks in one were found(1)
That he who form'd the wish might deal the wound,

(1) [Caligula, being in a rage at the people, for favouring a party in the Circensian games in opposition to him, cried out, "I wish the Roman people had but one neck."]

This man had never heard; but of the kind,
Is that desire which rises in his mind;
He 'd have all English hands (for further he
Cannot conceive extends our charity),
All but his own, in one right-hand to grow,
And then what hearty shake would he bestow.

"How rose the Building?"—Piety first laid
A strong foundation, but she wanted aid;
To Wealth unwieldly was her prayer address'd,
Who largely gave, and she the donor bless'd:
Unwieldy Wealth then to his couch withdrew,
And took the sweetest sleep he ever knew.

Then busy Vanity sustain'd her part,
"And much," she said, "it moved her tender heart:
"To her all kinds of man's distress were known,
"And all her heart adopted as its own."

Then Science came—his talents he display'd,
And Charity with joy the dome survey'd;
Skill, Wealth, and Vanity, obtain the fame,
And Piety, the joy that makes no claim.

Patrons there are, and Governors, from whom
The greater aid and guiding orders come;
Who voluntary cares and labours take,
The sufferers' servants for the service' sake;
Of these a part I give you — but a part, —
Some hearts are hidden, some have not a heart.

First let me praise — for so I best shall paint
That pious moralist, that reasoning saint!
Can I of worth like thine, Eusebius, speak? (1)
The man is willing, but the Muse is weak:—

(1) [It was never doubted by Mr. Crabbe's family, that Eusebius was designed for a portraiture of Burke.]

'T is thine to wait on wo! to soothe! to heal!
With learning social, and polite with zeal:
In thy pure breast although the passions dwell,
They 're train'd by virtue, and no more rebel;
But have so long been active on her side,
That passion now might be itself the guide.

Law, conscience, honour, all obey'd; all give
Th' approving voice, and make it bliss to live;
While faith, when life can nothing more supply,
Shall strengthen hope, and make it bliss to die.(1)

He preaches, speaks and writes with manly sense,
No weak neglect, no labour'd eloquence;
Goodness and wisdom are in all his ways,
The rude revere him and the wicked praise.

Upon humility his virtues grow,
And tower so high because so fix'd below;
As wider spreads the oak his boughs around,
When deeper with his roots he digs the solid ground.

By him, from ward to ward, is every aid
The sufferer needs, with every care convey'd:
Like the good tree he brings his treasure forth,
And, like the tree, unconscious of his worth:
Meek as the poorest Publican is he,
And strict as lives the straightest Pharisee;
Of both, in him unite the better part,
The blameless conduct and the humble heart. (2)

(1) Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and t die. — POPE.

(2) [In some of Mr. Crabbe's graver descriptions there is a tone of chastised and unambitious serenity, which has a powerful influence on the heart, and affects it like the quiet glow of a mild evening. In reading of the passions of Eusebius habitually rallying on the side of virtue, we are forcibly reminded of one of the sublimest traits in modern writing. It is

Yet he escapes not; he, with some, is wise
In carnal things, and loves to moralize:
Others can doubt, if all that Christian care
Has not its price—there's something he may share:
But this and ill severer he sustains,
As gold the fire, and as unhurt remains;
When most reviled, although he feels the smart,
It wakes to nobler deeds the wounded heart,
As the rich olive, beaten for its fruit,
Puts forth at every bruise a bearing shoot.

A second Friend we have, whose care and zeal
But few can equal—few indeed can feel;
He lived a life obscure, and profits made
In the coarse habits of a vulgar trade.
His brother, master of a hoy, he loved
So well, that he the calling disapproved:
"Alas! poor Tom!" the landman oft would sigh,
When the gale freshen'd and the waves ran high;
And when they parted, with a tear he 'd say,
"No more adventure!—here in safety stay."
Nor did he feign; with more than half he had
He would have kept the seaman, and been glad

Alas! how few resist, when strongly tried—
A rich relation's nearer kinsman died;

---

the circumstance of the dying missionary in "Elizabeth," who spends his last breath in prayer, not for himself, but for his orphan charge:—"Il sembloit encore prier pour elle, quand déjà la mort l'avoit frappé: tant étoit grande en son ame l'habitude de la charité; tant, durant le cours de sa longue vie, il avoit négligé ses propres intérêts, pour ne songer qu'à ceux d'autrui, puisqu'au moment terrible de comparoitre devant le trône du souverain Juge, et de tomber pour toujours dans les abimes de l'éternité, ce n'étoit pas encore à lui qu'il pensoit."—GIFFORD.]

He sicken'd, and to him the landman went,
And all his hours with cousin Ephraim spent.
This Thomas heard, and cared not: "I," quoth he,
"Have one in port upon the watch for me."
So Ephraim died, and when the will was shown,
Isaac, the landman, had the whole his own:
Who to his brother sent a moderate purse,
Which he return'd, in anger, with his curse;
Then went to sea, and made his grog so strong,
He died before he could forgive the wrong.

The rich man built a house, both large and high,
He enter'd in and set him down to sigh;
He planted ample woods and gardens fair,
And walk'd with anguish and compunction there:
The rich man's pines, to every friend a treat,
He saw with pain, and he refused to eat;
His daintiest food, his richest wines, were all
Turn'd by remorse to vinegar and gall:
The softest down by living body press'd,
The rich man bought, and tried to take his rest;
But care had thorns upon his pillow spread,
And scatter'd sand and nettles in his bed:
Nervous he grew,—would often sigh and groan,
He talk'd but little, and he walk'd alone;
Till by his priest convinced, that from one deed
Of genuine love would joy and health proceed,
He from that time with care and zeal began
To seek and soothe the grievous ills of man;
And as his hands their aid to grief apply,
He learns to smile and he forgets to sigh.

Now he can drink his wine and taste his food,
And feel the blessings, Heav'n has dealt, are good;

And, since the suffering seek the rich man's door,
He sleeps as soundly as when young and poor.
Here much he gives—is urgent more to gain;
He begs—rich beggars seldom sue in vain:
Preachers most famed he moves, the crowd to move,
And never wearies in the work of love:
He rules all business, settles all affairs,
He makes collections, he directs repairs;
And if he wrong'd one brother,—Heav'n forgive
The man by whom so many brethren live!

Then, 'mid our Signatures, a name appears,
Of one for wisdom famed above his years;
And these were forty: he was from his youth
A patient searcher after useful truth:
To language little of his time he gave,
To science less, nor was the Muse's slave;
Sober and grave, his college sent him down,
A fair example for his native town.
Slowly he speaks, and with such solemn air,
You'd think a Socrates or Solon there;
For though a Christian, he 's disposed to draw
His rules from reason's and from nature's law.
"Know," he exclaims, "my fellow mortals, know,
"Virtue alone is happiness below;
'And what is virtue? prudence first to choose
"Life's real good,—the evil to refuse;
"Add justice then, the eager hand to hold,
"To curb the lust of power and thirst of gold;

" Join temp'rance next, that cheerful health insures,
" And fortitude unmoved, that conquers or endures."
He speaks, and lo!—the very man you see,
Prudent and temperate, just and patient he,
By prudence taught his worldly wealth to keep,
No folly wastes, no avarice swells the heap:
He no man's debtor, no man's patron lives;
Save sound advice, he neither asks nor gives;
By no vain thoughts or erring fancy sway'd,
His words are weighty, or at least are weigh'd;
Temp'rate in every place—abroad, at home,
Thence will applause, and hence will profit come;
And health from either—he in time prepares
For sickness, age, and their attendant cares,
But not for fancy's ills;—he never grieves
For love that wounds or friendship that deceives.
His patient soul endures what Heav'n ordains,
But neither feels nor fears ideal pains.
" Is aught then wanted in a man so wise?"—
Alas!—I think he wants infirmities;
He wants the ties that knit us to our kind—
The cheerful, tender, soft, complacent mind,
That would the feelings, which he dreads, excite,
And make the virtues he approves delight;
What dying martyrs, saints, and patriots feel,
The strength of action and the warmth of zeal.
Again attend!—and see a man whose cares
Are nicely placed on either world's affairs,—
Merchant and saint; 't is doubtful if he knows
To which account he most regard bestows;
Of both he keeps his ledger:—there he reads
Of gainful ventures and of godly deeds;

There all he gets or loses find a place,
A lucky bargain and a lack of grace.
The joys above this prudent man invite
To pay his tax—devotion! — day and night;
The pains of hell his timid bosom awe,
And force obedience to the church's law:
Hence that continual thought, — that solemn air,
Those sad good works, and that laborious prayer.
All these (when conscience, waken'd and afraid,
To think how avarice calls and is obey'd)
He in his journal finds, and for his grief
Obtains the transient opium of relief.
" Sink not, my soul! — my spirit, rise and look
" O'er the fair entries of this precious book:
" Here are the sins, our debts; — this fairer side
" Has what to carnal wish our strength denied;
" Has those religious duties every day
" Paid, — which so few upon the sabbath pay;
" Here too are conquests over frail desires,
" Attendance due on all the church requires;
" Then alms I give — for I believe the word
" Of holy writ, and lend unto the Lord,
" And if not all th' importunate demand,
" The fear of want restrains my ready hand:
" — Behold! what sums I to the poor resign,
" Sums placed in Heaven's own book, as well as mine:
" Rest then, my spirit!—fastings, prayers, and alms,
" Will soon suppress these idly-raised alarms,
" And weigh'd against our frailties, set in view
" A noble balance in our favour due:
" Add that I yearly here affix my name,
" Pledge for large payment—not from love of fame,

" But to make peace within ; — that peace to make,
" What sums I lavish ! and what gains forsake !
" Cheer up, my heart ! let's cast off every doubt,
" Pray without dread, and place our money out."
Such the religion of a mind that steers
Its way to bliss, between its hopes and fears ;
Whose passions in due bounds each other keep,
And thus subdued, they murmur till they sleep ;
Whose virtues all their certain limits know,
Like well-dried herbs that neither fade nor grow ;
Who for success and safety ever tries,
And with both worlds alternately complies.
Such are the Guardians of this bless'd estate,
Whate'er without, they're praised within the gate ;
That they are men, and have their faults, is true,
But here their worth alone appears in view :
The Muse indeed, who reads the very breast,
Has something of the secrets there express'd,
But yet in charity ; — and when she sees
Such means for joy or comfort, health or ease,
And knows how much united minds effect,
She almost dreads their failings to detect ;
But Truth commands : — in man's erroneous kind,
Virtues and frailties mingle in the mind,
Happy ! — when fears to public spirit move,
And even vices do the work of love. (1)

(1) The characters of the Hospital Directors were written many years since, and, so far as I was capable of judging, are drawn with *fidelity*. I mention this circumstance, that, if any reader should find a difference in the versification or expression, he will be thus enabled to account for it.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVIII.

THE POOR AND THEIR DWELLINGS.

Bene paupertas
Humili tecto contenta latet. — SENECA.

Omnes quibu' res sunt minu' secundæ, magi' sunt, nescio quo modo,
Suspiciosi; ad contumeliam omnia accipiunt magis;
Propter suam impotentiam se semper credunt negligi. — TERENT.

To quit of torpid sluggishness the cave,
And from the pow'rful arms of sloth be free,
'T is rising from the dead — Alas! it cannot be. — THOMSON.

The Method of treating the Borough Paupers — Many maintained at their own Dwellings — Some Characters of the Poor — The School-mistress, when aged — The Idiot — The poor Sailor — The declined Tradesman and his Companion — This contrasted with the Maintenance of the Poor in a common Mansion erected by the Hundred — The Objections to this Method: Not Want, nor Cruelty, but the necessary Evils of this Mode — What they are — Instances of the Evil — A Return to the Borough Poor — The Dwellings of these — The Lanes and By-ways — No Attention here paid to Convenience — The Pools in the Path-ways — Amusements of Sea-port Children — The Town-Flora — Herbs on Walls and vacant Spaces — A female Inhabitant of an Alley — A large Building let to several poor Inhabitants — Their Manners and Habits.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XVIII.

THE POOR AND THEIR DWELLINGS. (1)

YES! we've our Borough-vices, and I know
How far they spread, how rapidly they grow;
Yet think not virtue quits the busy place,
Nor charity, the virtues' crown and grace.
"Our Poor, how feed we?"—To the most we give
A weekly dole, and at their homes they live;—
Others together dwell,—but when they come
To the low roof, they see a kind of home,

(1) The Poor are here almost of necessity introduced, for they must be considered, in every place, as a large and interesting portion of its inhabitants. I am aware of the great difficulty of acquiring just notions on the maintenance and management of this class of our fellow-subjects, and I forbear to express any opinion of the various modes which have been discussed or adopted: of one method only I venture to give my sentiments,—that of collecting the poor of a hundred into one building. This admission of a vast number of persons, of all ages and both sexes, of very different inclinations, habits, and capacities, into a society, must, at a first view, I conceive, be looked upon as a cause of both vice and misery; nor does any thing which I have heard or read invalidate the opinion: happily, the method is not a prevailing one, as these houses are, I believe, still confined to that part of the kingdom where they originated.

A social people whom they've ever known,
With their own thoughts, and manners like their own
At her old house, her dress, her air the same,
I see mine ancient Letter-loving dame:
"Learning, my child," said she, "shall fame command;
"Learning is better worth than house or land—
"For houses perish, lands are gone and spent;
"In learning then excel, for that's most excellent."
"And what her learning?"—'Tis with awe to look
In every verse throughout one sacred book;
From this her joy, her hope, her peace is sought;
This she has learned, and she is nobly taught.
If aught of mine have gain'd the public ear;
If RUTLAND deigns these humble Tales to hear;
If critics pardon, what my friends approved;
Can I mine ancient Widow pass unmoved?
Shall I not think what pains the matron took,
When first I trembled o'er the gilded book?
How she, all patient, both at eve and morn,
Her needle pointed at the guarding horn;
And how she soothed me, when, with study sad,
I labour'd on to reach the final zad?
Shall I not grateful still the dame survey,
And ask the Muse the poet's debt to pay?
Nor I alone, who hold a trifler's pen,
But half our bench of wealthy, weighty men,
Who rule our Borough, who enforce our laws;
They own the matron as the leading cause,
And feel the pleasing debt, and pay the just applause:
To her own house is borne the week's supply,
There she in credit lives, there hopes in peace to die.

With her a harmless Idiot we behold,
Who hoards up silver shells for shining gold:
These he preserves, with unremitted care,
To buy a seat, and reign the Borough's mayor:
Alas! — who could th' ambitious changeling tell,
That what he sought our rulers dared to sell?
Near these a Sailor, in that hut of thatch
(A fish-boat's cabin is its nearest match),
Dwells, and the dungeon is to him a seat,
Large as he wishes — in his view complete:
A lockless coffer and a lidless hutch
That hold his stores, have room for twice as much
His one spare shirt, long glass, and iron box,
Lie all in view; no need has he for locks:
Here he abides, and, as our strangers pass,
He shows the shipping, he presents the glass;
He makes (unask'd) their ports and business known,
And (kindly heard) turns quickly to his own,
Of noble captains, heroes every one, —
You might as soon have made the steeple run.
And then his messmates, if you 're pleased to stay,
He 'll one by one the gallant souls display,
And as the story verges to an end,
He 'll wind from deed to deed, from friend to friend;
He 'll speak of those long lost, the brave of old,
As princes gen'rous and as heroes bold;
Then will his feelings rise, till you may trace
Gloom, like a cloud, frown o'er his manly face, —
And then a tear or two, which sting his pride;
These he will dash indignantly aside,
And splice his tale; — now take him from his cot,
And for some cleaner berth exchange his lot,

How will he all that cruel aid deplore?
His heart will break, and he will fight no more.
Here is the poor old Merchant: he declined,
And, as they say, is not in perfect mind;
In his poor house, with one poor maiden friend,
Quiet he paces to his journey's end.
Rich in his youth, he traded and he fail'd;
Again he tried, again his fate prevail'd;
His spirits low and his exertions small,
He fell perforce, he seem'd decreed to fall:
Like the gay knight, unapt to rise was he,
But downward sank with sad alacrity.
A borough-place we gain'd him — in disgrace
For gross neglect, he quickly lost the place;
But still he kept a kind of sullen pride,
Striving his wants to hinder or to hide;
At length, compell'd by very need, in grief
He wrote a proud petition for relief.
"He did suppose a fall, like his, would prove
"Of force to wake their sympathy and love;
"Would make them feel the changes all may know,
"And stir them up a due regard to show."
His suit was granted;—to an ancient maid,
Relieved herself, relief for him was paid:
Here they together (meet companions) dwell,
And dismal tales of man's misfortunes tell:
"'Twas not a world for them, God help them! they
"Could not deceive, nor flatter, nor betray;
"But there's a happy change, a scene to come,
"And they, God help them! shall be soon at home."

If these no pleasures nor enjoyments gain,
Still none their spirits nor their speech restrain;
They sigh at ease, 'mid comforts they complain.
The poor will grieve, the poor will weep and sigh,
Both when they know, and when they know not why;
But we our bounty with such care bestow
That cause for grieving they shall seldom know.

Your Plan I love not;—with a number you
Have placed your poor, your pitiable few:
There, in one house, throughout their lives to be,
The pauper-palace which they hate to see:
That giant-building, that high-bounding wall,
Those bare-worn walks, that lofty thund'ring hall!
That large loud clock, which tolls each dreaded hour,
Those gates and locks, and all those signs of power;
It is a prison, with a milder name,
Which few inhabit without dread or shame. (1)

(1) Show not to the poor thy pride,
Let their home a cottage be;
Nor the feeble body hide
In a palace fit for thee;
Let him not about him see
Lofty ceilings, ample halls,
Or a gate his boundary be,
Where nor friend or kinsman calls.

Let him not one walk behold,
That only one which he must tread,
Nor a chamber large and cold,
Where the aged and sick are led;
Better far his humble shed,
Humble sheds of neighbours by,
And the old and tatter'd bed,
Where he sleeps and hopes to die.

Be it agreed—the Poor who hither come
Partake of plenty, seldom found at home;
That airy rooms and decent beds are meant
To give the poor by day, by night, content;
That none are frighten'd, once admitted here,
By the stern looks of lordly Overseer:
Grant that the Guardians of the place attend,
And ready ear to each petition lend;
That they desire the grieving poor to show
What ills they feel, what partial acts they know,
Not without promise, nay desire to heal
Each wrong they suffer, and each wo they feel.

Alas! their sorrows in their bosoms dwell;
They've much to suffer, but have nought to tell;
They have no evil in the place to state,
And dare not say, it is the house they hate:
They own there's granted all such place can give,
But live repining, for 't is there they live.

Grandsires are there, who now no more must see,
No more must nurse upon the trembling knee
The lost loved daughter's infant progeny:
Like death's dread mansion, this allows not place
For joyful meetings of a kindred race.

Is not the matron there, to whom the son
Was wont at each declining day to run;
He (when his toil was over) gave delight,
By lifting up the latch, and one "*Good night?*'
Yes, she is here; but nightly to her door
The son, still lab'ring, can return no more.
Widows are here, who in their huts were left,
Of husbands, children, plenty, ease bereft;—

Yet all that grief within the humble shed
Was soften'd, softened in the humble bed:
But here, in all its force, remains the grief,
And not one soft'ning object for relief.

Who can, when here, the social neighbour meet?
Who learn the story current in the street?
Who to the long-known intimate impart
Facts they have learn'd or feelings of the heart?—
They talk indeed, but who can choose a friend,
Or seek companions at their journey's end?

Here are not those whom they, when infants, knew;
Who, with like fortune, up to manhood grew;
Who, with like troubles, at old age arrived;
Who, like themselves, the joy of life survived;
Whom time and custom so familiar made,
That looks the meaning in the mind convey'd:
But here to strangers, words nor looks impart
The various movements of the suffering heart;
Nor will that heart with those alliance own,
To whom its views and hopes are all unknown.

What, if no grievous fears their lives annoy,
Is it not worse no prospects to enjoy?
'Tis cheerless living in such bounded view,
With nothing dreadful, but with nothing new;
Nothing to bring them joy, to make them weep,—
The day itself is, like the night, asleep;
Or on the sameness if a break be made,
'Tis by some pauper to his grave convey'd;
By smuggled news from neighb'ring village told,
News never true, or truth a twelvemonth old;

By some new inmate doom'd with them to dwell,
Or justice come to see that all goes well;
Or change of room, or hour of leave to crawl
On the black footway winding with the wall,
Till the stern bell forbids, or master's sterner
call.

Here too the mother sees her children train'd,
Her voice excluded and her feelings pain'd:
Who govern here, by general rules must move,
Where ruthless custom rends the bond of love.
Nations we know have nature's law transgress'd,
And snatch'd the infant from the parent's breast;
But still for public good the boy was train'd,
The mother suffer'd, but the matron gain'd:
Here nature's outrage serves no cause to aid;
The ill is felt, but not the Spartan made.

Then too I own, it grieves me to behold
Those ever virtuous, helpless now and old,
By all for care and industry approved,
For truth respected, and for temper loved;
And who, by sickness and misfortune tried,
Gave want its worth and poverty its pride:
I own it grieves me to behold them sent
From their old home; 'tis pain, 'tis punishment,
To leave each scene familiar, every face,
For a new people and a stranger race;
For those who, sunk in sloth and dead to shame,
From scenes of guilt with daring spirits came;
Men, just and guileless, at such manners start,
And bless their God that time has fenced their
heart,

Confirm'd their virtue, and expell'd the fear
Of vice in minds so simple and sincere. (1)
Here the good pauper, losing all the praise
By worthy deeds acquired in better days,
Breathes a few months, then, to his chamber led,
Expires, while strangers prattle round his bed.
The grateful hunter, when his horse is old,
Wills not the useless favourite to be sold;
He knows his former worth, and gives him place
In some fair pasture, till he runs his race:
But has the labourer, has the seaman done
Less worthy service, though not dealt to one?
Shall we not then contribute to their ease,
In their old haunts, where ancient objects please?
That, till their sight shall fail them, they may trace
The well-known prospect and the long-loved face.
The noble oak, in distant ages seen,
With far-stretch'd boughs and foliage fresh and green,
Though now its bare and forky branches show
How much it lacks the vital warmth below,
The stately ruin yet our wonder gains,
Nay, moves our pity, without thought of pains:
Much more shall real wants and cares of age
Our gentler passions in their cause engage;—
Drooping and burthen'd with a weight of years,
What venerable ruin man appears!

(1) [A gentleman intimately acquainted with the Poet and his native county, says, "I hope this Letter may be read by all those who have the power to continue or suppress those odious Houses of Industry, seen, thank God! only in Suffolk, near the first founder's residence (*one* proof that they are not very beneficial), in which the poor of a whole hundred are collected in one building — well fed and clothed, I grant — but imprisoned for life."]

How worthy pity, love, respect, and grief—
He claims protection—he compels relief;—
And shall we send him from our view, to brave
The storms abroad, whom we at home might save,
And let a stranger dig our ancient brother's grave?
No!—we will shield him from the storm he fears,
And when he falls, embalm him with our tears.

Farewell to these; but all our poor to know,
Let's seek the winding Lane, the narrow Row,
Suburban prospects, where the traveller stops
To see the sloping tenement on props,
With building-yards immix'd, and humble sheds and shops;
Where the Cross-Keys and Plumber's-Arms invite
Laborious men to taste their coarse delight;
Where the low porches, stretching from the door,
Gave some distinction in the days of yore,
Yet now neglected, more offend the eye,
By gloom and ruin, than the cottage by:
Places like these the noblest town endures,
The gayest palace has its sinks and sewers.
Here is no pavement, no inviting shop,
To give us shelter when compell'd to stop;
But plashy puddles stand along the way,
Fill'd by the rain of one tempestuous day;
And these so closely to the buildings run,
That you must ford them, for you cannot shun;
Though here and there convenient bricks are laid,
And door-side heaps afford their dubious aid:

Lo! yonder shed; observe its garden-ground,
With the low paling, form'd of wreck, around:
There dwells a Fisher; if you view his boat,
With bed and barrel—'tis his house afloat;
Look at his house, where ropes, nets, blocks, abound,
Tar, pitch, and oakum—'tis his boat aground:
That space enclosed, but little he regards,
Spread o'er with relics of masts, sails, and yards:
Fish by the wall, on spit of elder, rest,
Of all his food, the cheapest and the best,
By his own labour caught, for his own hunger dress'd.

Here our reformers come not; none object
To paths polluted, or upbraid neglect;
None care that ashy heaps at doors are cast,
That coal dust flies along the blinding blast:
None heed the stagnant pools on either side,
Where ney-launch'd ships of infant-sailors ride:
Rodneys in rags here British valour boast,
And lisping Nelsons fright the Gallic coast.
They fix the rudder, set the swelling sail,
They point the bowsprit, and they blow the gale.
True to her port, the frigate scuds away,
And o'er that frowning ocean finds her bay:
Her owner rigg'd her, and he knows her worth,
And sees her, fearless, gunwale-deep go forth;
Dreadless he views his sea, by breezes curl'd,
When inch-high billows vex the watery world.

These, fed by food they love, to rankest size,
Around the dwellings docks and wormwood rise;
Here the strong mallow strikes her slimy root,
There the dull nightshade hangs her deadly fruit;

On hills of dust the henbane's faded green,
And pencil'd flower of sickly scent is seen;
At the wall's base the fiery nettle springs,
With fruit globose and fierce with poison'd stings;
Above (the growth of many a year) is spread
The yellow level of the stone-crop's bed;
In every chink delights the fern to grow,
With glossy leaf and tawny bloom below:(1)
These, with our sea-weeds, rolling up and down,
Form the contracted Flora(2) of the town.

Say, wilt thou more of scenes so sordid know?
Then will I lead thee down the dusty Row;
By the warm alley and the long close lane,—
There mark the fractured door and paper'd pane,
Where flags the noon-tide air, and, as you pass,
We fear to breathe the putrefying mass,
But fearless yonder matron; she disdains
To sigh for zephyrs from ambrosial plains;
But mends her meshes torn, and pours her lay
All in the stifling fervour of the day.

Her naked children round the alley run,
And roll'd in dust, are bronzed beneath the sun
Or gambol round the dame, who, loosely dress'd,
Woos the coy breeze to fan the open breast:
She, once a handmaid, strove by decent art
To charm her sailor's eye and touch his heart;

(1) The scenery is, I must acknowledge, in a certain degree, like that heretofore described in the "Village;" but that, also, was a maritime country:—if the objects be similar, the pictures must (in their principal features) be alike, or be bad pictures. I have varied them as much as I could, consistently with my wish to be accurate.

(2) The reader, unacquainted with the language of botany, is informed, that the Flora of a place means the vegetable species in it—of late, and is the title of a book which describes them.

Her bosom then was veil'd in kerchief clean,
And fancy left to form the charms unseen.
But when a wife, she lost her former care,
Nor thought on charms, nor time for dress could spare;
Careless she found her friends who dwelt beside,
No rival beauty kept alive her pride:
Still in her bosom virtue keeps her place,
But decency is gone, the virtues' guard and grace.
See that long boarded Building!—By these stairs
Each humble tenant to that home repairs—
By one large window lighted—it was made
For some bold project, some design in trade:
This fail'd,—and one, a humourist in his way,
(Ill was [illegible] numour,) bought it in decay;
Nor will [illegible]el, repair, or take it down;
'Tis his,—what cares he for the talk of town?
"No! he will let it to the poor;—a home
"Where he delights to see the creatures come:"
"They may be thieves;"—"Well, so are richer men;"
"Or idlers, cheats, or prostitutes;"—"What then?"
"Outcasts pursued by justice, vile and base;"—
"They need the more his pity and the place:"
Convert to system his vain mind has built,
He gives asylum to deceit and guilt.
In this vast room, each place by habit fix'd,
Are sexes, families, and ages mix'd—
To union forced by crime, by fear, by need,
And all in morals and in modes agreed;
Some [illegible]'d men, who from mankind remove;
[illegible]me ruin'd females, who yet talk of love;

And some grown old in idleness—the prey
To vicious spleen, still railing through the day;
And need and misery, vice and danger bind
In sad alliance each degraded mind.
That window view!—oil'd paper and old glass
Stain the strong rays, which, though impeded, pass,
And give a dusty warmth to that huge room,
The conquer'd sunshine's melancholy gloom;
When all those western rays, without so bright,
Within become a ghastly glimmering light,
As pale and faint upon the floor they fall,
Or feebly gleam on the opposing wall:
That floor, once oak, now pieced with fir unplaned,
Or, where not pieced, in places bored and stain'd;
That wall once whiten'd, now an odious sight,
Stain'd with all hues, except its ancient white;
The only door is fasten'd by a pin,
Or stubborn bar, that none may hurry in:
For this poor room, like rooms of greater pride,
At times contains what prudent men would hide.
Where'er the floor allows an even space,
Chalking and marks of various games have place;
Boys, without foresight, pleased in halters swing;
On a fix'd hook men cast a flying ring;
While gin and snuff their female neighbours share,
And the black beverage in the fractured ware.
On swinging shelf are things incongruous stored,—
Scraps of their food,—the cards and cribbage-board,—
With pipes and pouches; while on peg by peg
Hang a lost member's fiddle and its bow.

That still reminds them how he'd dance and play,
Ere sent untimely to the Convicts' Bay.
Here by a curtain, by a blanket there,
Are various beds conceal'd, but none with care;
Where some by day and some by night, as best
Suit their employments, seek uncertain rest;
The drowsy children at their pleasure creep
To the known crib, and there securely sleep.
Each end contains a grate, and these beside
Are hung utensils for their boil'd and fried—
All used at any hour, by night, by day,
As suit the purse, the person, or the prey.
Above the fire, the mantel-shelf contains
Of china-ware some poor unmatch'd remains;
There many a tea-cup's gaudy fragment stands,
All placed by vanity's unwearied hands;
For here she lives, e'en here she looks about,
To find some small consoling objects out:
Nor heed these Spartan dames their house, not sit
'Mid cares domestic,—they nor sew nor knit;
But of their fate discourse, their ways, their wars,
With arm'd authorities, their 'scapes and scars:
These lead to present evils, and a cup,
If fortune grant it, winds description up.
High hung at either end, and next the wall,
Two ancient mirrors show the forms of all,
In all their force;—these aid them in their dress.
But with the good, the evils too express,
Doubling each look of care, each token of distress.(1)

(1) [The graphic powers of Mr. Crabbe are too frequently wasted on unworthy objects. There is not, perhaps, in all English poetry, a more simple and highly-finished piece of painting, than this description of

a vast old boarded room or warehouse, which was let out, in the Borough, as a kind of undivided lodging, for beggars and vagabonds of every description. No Dutch painter ever presented an interior more distinctly to the eye, or ever gave half such a group to the imagination. — JEFFREY.]

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIX.

THE POOR OF THE BOROUGH.

THE PARISH-CLERK.

——— Nam dives qui fieri vult,
Et citò vult fieri; sed quæ reverentia legum,
Quis metus, aut pudor est unquam properantis avari?
JUV. *Sat.* xiv. (1)

Nocte brevem si fortè indulsit cura soporem,
Et to[illegible] versata thoro jam membra quiescunt,
Continuò templum et violati Numinis aras,
Et quod præcipuis mentem sudoribus urget,
'e videt in somnis; tua sacra et major imago
.umanâ turbat pavidum, cogitque fateri.—*Juv. Sat.* xiii. (2)

(1) [——he who covets wealth, disdains to wait:
Law threatens, conscience calls, yet on he hies,
And this he silences, and that defies.]

(2) [At night, should sleep his harass'd limbs compose,
And steal him one short moment from his woes,
Then dreams invade; sudden, before his eyes,
The violated fane and altar rise;
And (what disturbs him most) your injured shade,
In more than mortal majesty array'd,
Frowns on the wretch, alarms his treach'rous rest,
And wrings the dreadful secret from his breast.—GIFFORD.]

The Parish-Clerk began his Duties with the late Vicar, a grave and austere Man; one fully orthodox; a Detecter and Opposer of the Wiles of Satan — His Opinion of his own Fortitude — The more frail offended by these Professions — His good Advice gives further Provocation — They invent Stratagems to overcome his Virtue — His Triumph — He is yet not invulnerable: is assaulted by Fear of Want, and Avarice — He gradually yields to the Seductio.. — He reasons with himself, and is persuaded — He offends, but with Terror; repeats his Offence; grows familiar with Crime: is detected — His Sufferings and Death.

THE BOROUGH.

LETTER XIX.

THE PARISH-CLERK.

With our late Vicar, and his age the same,
His Clerk, hight *Jachin*, to his office came;
The like slow speech was his, the like tall slender frame:
But Jachin was the gravest man on ground,
And heard his master's jokes with look profound;
For worldly wealth this man of letters sigh'd,
And had a sprinkling of the spirit's pride:
But he was sober, chaste, devout, and just,
One whom his neighbours could believe and trust:
Of none suspected, neither man nor maid
By him were wrong'd, or were of him afraid.
There was indeed a frown, a trick of state
In Jachin;—formal was his air and gait:
But if he seem'd more solemn and less kind,
Than some light men to light affairs confined,
Still 't was allow'd that he should so behave
As in high seat, and be severely grave.

This book-taught man, to man's first foe profess'd
Defiance stern, and hate that knew not rest; (1)
He held that Satan, since the world began,
In every act, had strife with every man;
That never evil deed on earth was done,
But of the acting parties he was one;
The flattering guide to make ill prospects clear;
To smooth rough ways the constant pioneer;
The ever-tempting, soothing, softening power,
Ready to cheat, seduce, deceive, devour.
" Me has the sly Seducer oft withstood,"
Said pious Jachin,—" but he gets no good;
" I pass the house where swings the tempting sign,
" And pointing, tell him, ' Satan, that is thine:'
" I pass the damsels pacing down the street,
" And look more grave and solemn when we meet;
" Nor doth it irk me to rebuke their smiles,
" Their wanton ambling and their watchful wiles:
" Nay, like the good John Bunyan, when I view
" Those forms, I 'm angry at the ills they do:
" That I could pinch and spoil, in sin's despite,
" Beauties, which frail and evil thoughts excite. (2)
" At feasts and banquets seldom am I found,
" And (save at church) abhor a tuneful sound;
" To plays and shows I run not to and fro,
" And where my master goes, forbear to go."

(1) [Original edition: —
This book-taught man, with ready mind received
More than the Church commanded or believed.]

(2) John Bunyan, in one of the many productions of his zeal, has ventured to make public this extraordinary sentiment, which the Clerk piety of our Clerk so readily adopted.

No wonder Satan took the thing amiss,
To be opposed by such a man as this—
A man so grave, important, cautious, wise,
Who dared not trust his feeling or his eyes;
No wonder he should lurk and lie in wait,
Should fit his hooks and ponder on his bait,
Should on his movements keep a watchful eye;
For he pursued a fish who led the fry.

With his own peace our Clerk was not content,
He tried, good man! to make his friends repent.

"Nay, nay, my friends, from inns and taverns fly;
"You may suppress your thirst, but not supply:
"A foolish proverb says, 'the devil's at home;'
"But he is there, and tempts in every room:
"Men feel, they know not why, such places please;
"His are the spells—they're idleness and ease;
"Magic of fatal kind he throws around,
"Where care is banish'd but the heart is bound.
"Think not of Beauty;—when a maid you meet,
"Turn from her view and step across the street;
"Dread all the sex: their looks create a charm,
"A smile should fright you and a word alarm:
"E'en I myself, with all my watchful care,
"Have for an instant felt th' insidious snare;
"And caught my sinful eyes at the endang'ring stare;
"Till I was forced to smite my bounding breast
"With forceful blow, and bid the bold-one rest.
"Go not with crowds when they to pleasure run,
"But public joy in private safety shun:

" When bells, diverted from their true intent,
" Ring loud for some deluded mortal sent
" To hear or make long speech in parliament;
" What time the many, that unruly beast,
" Roars its rough joy and shares the final feast:
" Then heed my counsel, shut thine ears and eyes;
" A few will hear me—for the few are wise."

Not Satan's friends, nor Satan's self could bear
The cautious man who took of souls such care;
An interloper,—one who, out of place,
Had volunteer'd upon the side of grace:
There was his master ready once a week
To give advice; what further need he seek?
" Amen, so be it:"—what had he to do
With more than this?—'t was insolent and new;
And some determined on a way to see
How frail he was, that so it might not be.

First they essay'd to tempt our saint to sin,
By points of doctrine argued at an inn;
Where he might warmly reason, deeply drink,
Then lose all power to argue and to think.

In vain they tried; he took the question up,
Clear'd every doubt, and barely touch'd the cup:
By many a text he proved his doctrine sound,
And look'd in triumph on the tempters round.

Next 't was their care an artful lass to find,
Who might consult him, as perplex'd in mind;
She they conceived might put her case with fears,
With tender tremblings and seducing tears;
She might such charms of various kind display,
That he would feel their force and melt away.

For why of nymphs such caution and such dread,
Unless he felt, and fear'd to be misled?
She came, she spake: he calmly heard her case,
And plainly told her 't was a want of grace;
Bade her "such fancies and affections check,
"And wear a thicker muslin on her neck."
Abased, his human foes the combat fled,
And the stern clerk yet higher held his head.
They were indeed a weak, impatient set,
But their shrewd prompter had his engines yet;
Had various means to make a mortal trip,
Who shunn'd a flowing bowl and rosy lip;
And knew a thousand ways his heart to move,
Who flies from banquets and who laughs at love.
Thus far the playful Muse has lent her aid,
But now departs, of graver theme afraid;
Her may we seek in more appropriate time,—
There is no jesting with distress and crime.
Our worthy Clerk had now arrived at fame,
Such as but few in his degree might claim;
But he was poor, and wanted not the sense
That lowly rates the praise without the pence:
He saw the common herd with reverence treat
The weakest burgess whom they chanced to meet;
While few respected his exalted views,
And all beheld his doublet and his shoes:
None, when they meet, would to his parts allow
(Save his poor boys) a hearing or a bow:
To this false judgment of the vulgar mind,
He was not fully, as a saint, resign'd;
He . . und it much his jealous soul affect,
To fear derision and to find neglect.

The year was bad, the christening-fees were small,
The weddings few, the parties paupers all:
Desire of gain with fear of want combined,
Raised sad commotion in his wounded mind;
Wealth was in all his thoughts, his views, his dreams,
And prompted base desires and baseless schemes.
Alas! how often erring mortals keep
The strongest watch against the foes who sleep;
While the more wakeful, bold and artful foe
Is suffer'd guardless and unmark'd to go.
Once in a month the sacramental bread
Our Clerk with wine upon the table spread:
The custom this, that, as the vicar reads,
He for our off'rings round the church proceeds:
Tall spacious seats the wealthier people hid,
And none had view of what his neighbour did:
Laid on the box and mingled when they fell,
Who should the worth of each oblation tell?
Now as poor Jachin took the usual round,
And saw the alms and heard the metal sound,
He had a thought — at first it was no more
Than — "these have cash and give it to the poor"
A second thought from this to work began —
"And can they give it to a poorer man?"
Proceeding thus, — "My merit could they know,
"And knew my need, how freely they'd bestow;
"But though they know not, these remain the same,
"And are a strong, although a secret claim:
"To me, alas! the want and worth are known,
"Why then, in fact, 'tis but to take my own."
Thought after thought pour'd in, a tempting train,
"Suppose it done, — who is it could complain?

" How could the poor? for they such trifles share,
" As add no comfort, as suppress no care;
" But many a pittance makes a worthy heap, —
" What says the law? that silence puts to sleep: —
" Nought then forbids, the danger could we shun,
" And sure the business may be safely done.
" But am I earnest? — earnest? No. — I say,
" If such my mind, that I could plan a way;
" Let me reflect; — I 've not allow'd me time
" To purse the pieces, and if dropp'd they'd chime: "
Fertile is evil in the soul of man, —
He paused, — said Jachin, " They may drop on bran.
" Why then 'tis safe and (all consider'd) just,
" The poor receive it, — 'tis no breach of trust:
" The old and widows may their trifles miss,
" There must be evil in a good like this:
" But I'll be kind — the sick I'll visit twice,
" When now but once, and freely give advice.
" Yet let me think again: " — Again he tried,
For stronger reasons on his passion's side,
And quickly these were found, yet slowly he complied.

The morning came: the common service done,
Shut every door, — the solemn rite begun, —
And, as the priest the sacred sayings read,
The clerk went forward, trembling as he tread:
O'er the tall pew he held the box, and heard
The offer'd piece, rejoicing as he fear'd:
Just by the pillar, as he cautious tripp'd,
And turn'd the aile, he then a portion slipp'd
From the full store, and to the pocket sent,
But held a moment — and then down it went.

The priest read on, on walk'd the man afraid,
Till a gold offering in the plate was laid;
Trembling he took it, for a moment stopp'd,
Then down it fell, and sounded as it dropp'd;
Amazed he started, for th' affrighted man,
Lost and bewilder'd, thought not of the brass.
But all were silent, all on things intent
Of high concern, none ear to money lent:
So on he walk'd, more cautious than before,
And gain'd the purposed sum and one piece more.
"Practice makes perfect:" when the month came round,
He dropp'd the cash, nor listen'd for a sound;
But yet, when last of all th' assembled flock
He ate and drank, — it gave th' electric shock:
Oft was he forced his reasons to repeat,
Ere he could kneel in quiet at his seat;
But custom soothed him — ere a single year
All this was was done without restraint or fear:
Cool and collected, easy and composed,
He was correct till all the service closed;
Then to his home, without a groan or sigh,
Gravely he went, and laid his treasure by.
Want will complain: some wives had express'd
A doubt if they were favour'd like the rest;
The rest described with like regret their dole,
And thus from parts they reason'd to the whole:
When all agreed some evil must be done,
Or rich men's hearts grew harder than a stone.
Our easy vicar cut the matter short;
He would not listen to such vile report.

All were not thus — there govern'd in that year
A stern stout churl, an angry overseer;
A tyrant fond of power, loud, lewd, and most severe:
Him the mild vicar, him the graver clerk,
Advised, reproved, but nothing would he mark,
Save the disgrace, "and that, my friends," said he,
"Will I avenge, whenever time may be."
And now, alas! 'twas time; — from man to man
Doubt and alarm and shrewd suspicions ran.

With angry spirit and with sly intent,
This parish-ruler to the altar went:
A private mark he fix'd on shillings three,
And but one mark could in the money see;
Besides, in peering round, he chanced to note
A sprinkling slight on Jachin's Sunday-coat:
No doubt was over:—when the flock were bless'd,
In wrath he rose, and thus his mind express'd.

"Foul deeds are here!" and saying this, he took
The Clerk, whose conscience, in her cold-fit, shook:
His pocket then was emptied on the place;
All saw his guilt; all witness'd his disgrace:
He fell, he fainted, not a groan, a look,
Escaped the culprit; 'twas a final stroke —
A death-wound never to be heal'd — a fall
That all had witness'd, and amazed were all.

As he recover'd, to his mind it came,
"I owe to Satan this disgrace and shame:"
All the seduction now appear'd in view;
"Let me withdraw," he said, and he withdrew:
No one withheld him, all in union cried,
Even the avenger, — "We are satisfied:

For what has death in any form to give,
Equal to that man's terrors, if he live?
He lived in freedom, but he hourly saw
How much more fatal justice is than law;
He saw another in his office reign,
And his mild master treat him with disdain:
He saw that all men shunn'd him, some reviled,
The harsh pass'd frowning, and the simple smiled;
The town maintain'd him, but with some reproof,
"And clerks and scholars proudly kept aloof."
In each lone place, dejected and dismay'd,
Shrinking from view, his wasting form he laid;
Or to the restless sea and roaring wind
Gave the strong yearnings of a ruin'd mind:
On the broad beach, the silent summer-day,
Stretch'd on some wreck, he wore his life away;
Or where the river mingles with the sea,
Or on the mud-bank by the elder tree,
Or by the bounding marsh-dyke, there was he:
And when unable to forsake the town,
In the blind courts he sate despondent; down —
Always alone; then feebly would he crawl
The church-way walk, and lean upon the wall:
Too ill for this, he lay beside the door,
Compell'd to hear the reasoning of the poor:
He look'd so pale, so weak, the pitying crowd
Their firm belief of his repentance vow'd;
They saw him then so ghastly and so thin,
That they exclaim'd, "Is this the work of sin?"
"Yes," in his better moments he replied,
"Of sinful avarice and the spirit's pride;—

" While yet untempted, I was safe and well;
" Temptation came; I reason'd, and I fell:
" To be man's guide and glory I design'd
" A rare example for our sinful kind;
" But now my weakness and my guilt I see,
" And am a warning — man, be warn'd by me!"
He said, and saw no more the human face;
To a lone loft he went, his dying place,
And, as the vicar of his state inquired,
Turn'd to the wall and silently expired! (1)

(1) It has been observed, that the story of the Parish Clerk has a bad moral, as it insinuates that there are certain temptations under which we cannot fail to yield, and, in fact, that we are puppets of an overpowering destiny. The author is sorry that any such inferences should be drawn from this relation, or from any other part of his book: what he meant to exhibit was, rather, the fall of a conceited and ostentatious man, who, when tempted, had not recourse to proper means of resistance, and an illustration of that scripture precept, " Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Neither did the author, on this or on any other occasion, mean to deny the doctrine of seducing spirits, or one who is the chief of them: what he presumed to censure was the enthusiasm and conceit of those who take every absurd or perverse suggestion of their own spirits for the unquestionable temptation of the evil-one, and every denial of a solicitin[illegible]petite for a conquest over that enemy of souls; thus perpetually ac[illegible]inistering fresh food for enthusiastic delight, and new triumph for sp[illegible]itual pride.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.


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